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The Buddha's System of Meditation

Ayodhya Prasad Pradhan

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Practical Yoga is not openly taught by yogins. It is even difficult to get them to talk on the subject or to tell their experiences. Great differences exist between their practical experiences and the theoretical knowledge obtained from literature relating to Yoga, samādhi, or meditation, that is known to be extant today. Whatever be the method taught, learnt, or followed in meditation, the real thing ultimately depends on one's own experience in it.

The system of meditation outlined in this book is based on the experiences of the Buddha himself, and his disciples as contained in Pali literature to which the author has had access. The Master eschewed the theoretical method of knowing the truth. The practical method he adopted was one of meditation and the insight based on it. It consists of progressive steps, stages, and courses of Dhammas claimed to have been discovered, practised, and taught by the Master.

Whatever we find in the Buddha's system must have issued from his own experience or thinking; for he has sought none of the old authorities ever known to us for the ramifications of Dhammas obtaining in regions extending from gross to subtle, lower to higher, normal to supernormal, mundane to supramundane. It short, the Dhammas extend from bondage to liberation, self-entanglement to self-elimination, and Samsara to its extinction called Nibbana; evidently this is a unique system.

The work has been executed in several phases. This was inevitable as the author has had to go through voluminous literature in the original to discover the essence of the Buddha's teaching. He began writing it in 1974 following four decades of his quest for truth. The work is dedicated to His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal.

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The Buddha's System of Meditation

PHASE V

DEVELOPMENT OF SUPERNORMAL SENSES AND MANIFESTATION

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I

Introduction

Tradition of Auspicious Beginning

THE TRADITION of initiating a religious recitation, or beginning a work on secular, religious, philosophical, or yogic subject, with an invocation or salutation to some object of reverence deified, personified, mystic, or thought auspicious, must have come down from very olden times. The mystic syllable 'Aum' or 'Om', probably a mystic invocation in the initial stage Vedic or even pre-Vedic, might have later acquired or was made to convey a concentrated gist of Vedic faith. Thus the monosyllabic word served as a significant beginning for initiating a Vedic Mantra, hymn, or text in verse. Ordinarily a mantra means a spell, charm, or incantation that is to be continually repeated till the desired effect is produced. A mantra of the latter category is not disclosed to the uninitiated and hence to the people in general. For this reason such a mantra will not generally form part of an initiatory word, phrase, or sentence put in the beginning of a work.

The Master, Gautama Buddha, might have been possibly aware of this mystic word. But he has never spoken of this word. This syllable, however, appears to have been borrowed from Vedic usage and adopted in later stage of development or diversion of Buddhism along Mahā-Sāñghic, Mahā-Yānic, Vajra-Yānic, Mantra-Yānic, and Tāntric or ritualistic lines. This

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word herein, however, loses its Vedic meaning and conveys a sense compatible with the main trend of Buddhistic faith. The prevalence of this syllable in mantras of Buddhistic stamp in later times may be gauged from its presence in numerous short mantras, particularly in the mantra "Om maṇi-padme hūm", the most popular formula for recitation in Lamaistic Buddhism. The first letter and the last one of this formula, if nazalized in pronouncing them, would constitute a seed (bīja) mantra in Tāntric terminology. The middle compound word between these two letters may denote either one of the five divine emanations of "Ādi (primordial) Buddha" (swayambhū), or signify a mystic lotus. Both these ideas, however, are not found in the Pāli text and commentary.

The acceptance of mantras for various purposes in other systems of religion, philosophy, or yoga appears to have never influenced early Buddhism. Even the recitation of formulary salutation, praise, or remembrance of the triple gems, that is, Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, has not been recommended by the Master as that of mantras. We find no particular rituals performed in one's conversion to Buddhism or in the initiation and ordination of a novice to the order of monks, excepting an expression of conviction and an acceptance of abstaining from ten evil actions and observing rules of conduct, respectively. The expression of conviction in Buddhistic faith, found at the end of the relevant discourses, is thought enough for a new convert who becomes thenceforth an upāsaka or layman. Such a convert may even attain then and there the first stage of supramundane insight termed "sotāpanna", or 'one who has entered the stream' tending towards Nibbāna. In this state it is said that there arises the "dhamma cakkhu" or the 'eye of dhamma' or 'to see whatever is produced is subject to cessation' (destruction). No mantras are mentioned or recommended for this purpose.

The acceptance of Buddhism entails on a person converted, initiated, or ordained an obligation of observing a number of sīlas or abstentions and rules of conduct. Nowhere in these rules do we find any hint at or an indication of mantras. In suttas or discourses wherever the word 'manta' (mantra in

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Sanskrit) is met with, it is given either in connection with bad livelihood, or derision and denunciation of mantras. Even where we find the phrase "Buddha mantā" in describing the Brāhmaṇical learning, the commentary of the Majjhima Nikāya on the Brahmāyu sutta (11.41) understands by the phrase, "Mahāpurisa-Lakkhaṇa" to mean a sattha (śāstra in Sanskrit) or scripture. The scripture, the commentary says, treats of signs of great persons in twelve (*sic*) thousand counts (probably of ślokas). Out of these counts sixteen (*sic*) thousand Gāthās, the commentary further says, are concerned with "Buddha mantā"; these mantā (or mantras in ordinary usage) describe "signs designating Buddhas, Pacceka-buddhas, two principal and eighty mahā or great sāvakas or disciples, Buddha's parents, principal attendants, and King Cakkavatti or sovereign over the whole earth".

Apparently, the early commentators of the Pāli text seem unaware of mantra literature. They also display a sort of ignorance concerning Vedic and scriptural literature that might have been available to them, if they were keen enough to be acquainted with it. For we are not aware of any scripture that the commentary speaks of. Although we have some description of thirty-two auspicious signs scattered in Brāhmaṇic scriptures, but not as the commentary specifies. Some Hindu Purāṇas or mythological works have given us a long or short account of the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu, but not that of Buddhas (in plural). The purpose of this incarnation was, according to the Himavat Khaṇḍa (division) of the *Skanda Purāṇa*, to dissuade the asuras (the enemy of devas or heavenly inhabitants) from their long and hard 'tapasyā' or austerities to regain the Heavenly region formerly lost to the Devas by their ancestors. Some Purāṇas say that the purpose was to dissuade the asuras from performing any effective or meritorious secrifice (yajña).

About the calculation of counts of a Sanskrit work also, the commentary is seemingly confusing. For, the extent of a literary work in Sanskrit prose or verse is calculated in numbers of 'Anuṣṭubh Chanda' or a particular metre or śloka containing thirty-two letters or syllables. And a gāthā in Pāli also generally contains about the same number of letters. Hence the number of counts of a work cannot be less than that of its part. This

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shows that the Pāli commentatorial literature did neither care to conform to the niceties of Sanskrit scriptures nor try to borrow things from them. In fact, any borrowing was impossible from Sanskrit for and into Pāli, when their system fundamentally differed so much.

To resume the topic under discussion, we may fairly conclude from what has been said above that early Buddhism had not anything that smacks of mantra complex. When the mantra in its ordinary sense was totally ignored in the text of the Plai *Tipiṭaka* (Tripiṭaka in Sanskrit), that is, 'Three Baskets' or collections of sutta (discourse), Vinaya (rules of conduct), and Abhidhamma (classification of Dhammas), the need of auspicious beginning was also done away with in the text. The Master, when inclined to preach something to his disciples, directly addresses them as "Bhikkhavo" or "O Monks". They respond to the call as "Bhadante", or Reverend Sir! Then the Master, making the disciples thus fully alert, forthwith introduces the subject he is going to preach on. This spirit of the Master is followed in almost all the Books of the *Tipiṭaka*. No introduction is therefore found at the beginning of the first four Nikayas and almost all the fifteen books of the fifth or *Khuddaka Nikāya*.

The Books of the *Vinaya Piṭaka* treat of rules of initiation, ordination, and conduct for novices and monks and nuns. The circumstances under which these rules were promulgated and revised give us an insight into the gradual development of *Vinaya* entirely due to the practical acumen of the Master supported by the conscientious followers in ever-increasing numbers. The explanation, illustration, and instances of these rules make the *Vinaya* a unique literature replete with instances of the thinking and practices of the then intelligentsia and people in general, and with those of the competence and endurance of novices and monks and runs. The Books of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, on the other hand, are evidently a gradual growth of classified collection of dhammas from the suttas preached by the Master during the forty-five years of his ministry.

The theory of this preaching the entire *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* in heaven a few years after his Enlightenment is obviously an anomaly hard to be reconciled with the then course of events

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that will be enumerated in a later seetion hereof. As the nature of the contents of both the *Vinaya* and *Abhidhamma Piṭakas* will suggest, there did not arise the need for an auspicious beginning. And a direct beginning was possible and simply followed. But the tradition of an auspicious beginning was too strong to be suspended any longer. When a fitting formula spontaneously or extemporaneously uttered in salutation to the Buddha caught the imagination of the clergy and laity alike, it was adopted as a general form of worship or adoration to the Buddha, which probably also served at the same time thenceforward for an auspicious formula to begin any work in Pali. In the next section we shall see how the formula originated.

Formula of Worship or Adoration to the Buddha

There are several set forms in Pāli which are used to praise and thereby to worship the Buddha. These forms are in prose and also in verse. But their length does not fit in to serve for a proper position for a general beginning. The form of the triple refuge is too ecclesiastical to be used for the purpose. The Marigala Sutta, or the auspicious discourse, though in verse, is obviously too secular and too long to initiate a serious purpose. The gap of an auspicious beginning was, however, fortuitously filled up by a marvellous 'udāna', or an utterance, or an outburst of reverence towards the Buddha. This udāna closely resembles a Vedic mantra in form and the popular Gāyatri mantra in cadence. This was obviously uttered in appreciative reverence towards the Buddha singled out of the customary 'Three Gems' (ratanattaya or ratnatraya in Sanskrit)—Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. The occasion of the utterance of this udāna, recorded in the five instances collected from the *Dīgha Majjhima and Aṅguttara Nikāyas* and given in the next following sections shows that this was uttered originally by laymen apparently when the Master was not present before them. The second word, 'Tassa' or 'to Him', of the utterance also indicates the same thing.

It cannot possibly have been due to mere chance that different persons in different places should have happened to pronounce the same expression in the same form that is not in

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strict conformity with the set form of the usual expression praising the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. The singling out of the Buddha in the new form is significant, and so is the connivance of the Master at the new expression that stands alone without the express mention of the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. To all appearances the Master was aware of the need of a closely knit formula felt by the laity, and when it suddenly burst out, he gave it silent or tacit assent. The formula caught the imagination of the people immediately and spread throughout the then Buddhistic world. It was at once accepted even without the express sanction of the Master to serve for an auspicious beginning so it served at everything Buddhistic, at least in the Pali canon and canonical and commentatorial literature. It is a marvel that a layman's utterance should have been acknowledged so extensively; but it could not have happened without some reason. We shall try to find out the reason below and the endeavour will give us a profitable aid in unravelling the intricate problem to be met with in the field of Buddhistic learning off and on.

The formula disscused above is in Pāli as this: "Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambudhassa." The first word 'Namo' is grammatically an indeclinable one and means 'salutation' with the dative case. The rest of the words are in the dative case and refer to the Buddha in his most ideal state. Thus the literal meaning of the formula would be "Salutation to him, the Blessed One, the Adorable and Liberated One, the By-Himself Perfectly Enlightened One." This formula can, however, be derived by a slight change from the first sentence of the regular expression or passage in praise of the Buddha. It is this: "Itipi so bhagavā araham sammā-sambhuddho." The change is to be made by replacing the indeclinable word 'Itipi' (it is also) with the indeclinable word 'Namo' (Salutation). And the rest of the words in the nominative case are to be changed into the dative as genitive case or the genitive one. This slight change will give us the above formula.

But an udāna is not the result of a mental exercise. This is an outburst of mental concomitants surging up into works to ease the mental tension. We have instances of the Master's own udānas which were not premeditated but uttered spontaneously .

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Even some gāthās short or long are said to be spontaneously uttered or extemporaneously spoken as "ṭhānaso paṭibhāti" or as it occurs (in one's mind) on the spot. The formula under discussion, however, is so akin to a Vedic mantra in form and the Gāyatri mantra in cadence, that a man habituated to reciting these mantras might have involuntarily turned the above sentence of the canonical expression into an exquisite formula of devotion and worship offered to the Buddha. The men in two cases out of the five instances to follow happen to be Brāhmaṇas said to have been well-versed in Vedic lore and literature. Another case is that of a Brahmani who was so much captivated with the formula that she was in the habit of pronouncing it off and on. The fourth case is that of Pasenadi, King of Kosala, himself.

In the fifth case or the first of the succeeding five instances, the supernormal element is introduced. Such elements render great help, in spite of their dubious character, to our arriving at a certain conclusion about certain events, occurrences and phenomena, whether or not these things actually happened. Thus the persuasion of Māra on the Great Renunciation of the Shākya Prince from Kapilavatthu proves that the event had actually occurred, that it was a case of actual renunciation, and that the household life of our Prince was at an end and that he could never revert to it for all time to come. The relevant section of the *Lalita-Vistara* clearly records that the Prince's exit was final. It was also the first visit of Māra. Although it must have been known to him also that the Prince was destined or prophesied to become a perfectly enlightened world teacher, he delayed to appear so long.

From this mysterious introduction of Māra, we have also some opportunity of studying this mythical person. He is said to have followed constantly the Bodhisattva for seven years. Thereafter also we find him interfering with the Master's preaching off and on. The Master, however, knew him everytime he interfered. Hence he cannot be a mere mental fantasy of the Master or his disciples. If we succeed in unravelling him, we shall be able to form some substantial ideas of other heavenly beings by analogy. For he is the frequent visitor and at the

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same time the most controversial person in Buddhism. Nevertheless, he is unlike Satan found in some religions. He is a veritable heavenly being and never against anyone excepting the Buddha and the propagation of his Dhamma.

Sakka (Śakra) is the King of the heavenly beings (devānam Indo; Indra). This mythical person is also closely related with the supernormal element in Buddhism. He is thoroughly converted to this religion, even when he was not in contact with the Master in his previous life as Magha Māṇava. This is fully dealt with in the Sakka-vatthu, the commentatorial story on Gāthā No. 30 of the *Dhammapada* Anthology. A certain Licchavi named Mahāli, an inhabitant of Vesāli, having heard the Sakka Pañha Sutta (Digha II. 8) given hereafter, had expressed his doubt about the real Sakka having been seen by the Master, before himself at the Kūṭāgāra Sālā in Vesāli. The Master affirmed to him that he had seen "Sakko Devānam Indo" and related the past story of the latter. Of course, we may doubt what we do not see or have not seen; but for that reason we should not deny the very existence or the possibility of such beings. For who knows that our own destiny might not lead us to some mysterious region in future. Hence an open mind would be more profitable to us as yogins or meditationist than a mind closed to further developments and possibilities.

Five Instances of Spontaneous Expression of Reverence and Worship

The set form of expression of one's conviction in what the Master thought in the relevant sutta or discourse is given in a stereotyped form at the end of the sutta concerned. The wording in depicting one's own wonder and elation at the Master's preaching might have been different with different persons. The similes used to illustrate one's sudden grasp of the Master's teaching might also have been varied or even absent in some cases. The vow to become a convert to Buddhism throughout the rest of one's life might have been worded differently by different persons. But we have a 'peyyāla' or stereotyped passage covering the above alternatives. This will show that the vast collection of peyyālas in the *Tipiṭaka* gives us a form of good composition covering alternatives, not the actual words spoken at each time

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under varying circumstances. This is one of the reasons why we have to make a critical study even of the text, specially when we are endeavouring to find out the practical devices followed and taught by the Master. These devices, when given in peyyāla-like forms, are often of little practical use, not to speak of good service as a graduated course.

Then we have to seek help in the commentary which ultimately refers to Buddhaghosa's work, the *Visuddhi-magga*, for all particulars. In the introductory verse of the commentary of the first four Nikāyas, he writes thus:

> Sīlakathā (story or description of virtue), Dhuta-dhammā (practices of an ascetic), Kammaṭṭhānāni (objects or devices for meditation), ... all these (subjects) have been clearly treated of by me (Buddhaghosa) in the *Visuddhimagga*. Hence I shall not consider over this (list of subjects) again herein (in this commentary). This *Visuddhi-magga* (being placed, that is, consulted) in the middle (position) of the four Āgamas (Nikāyas) will expose the meaning of what was said therein. . . . . .

This shows that Buddhaghosa has given or repeated to us scarcely everything of practical value from the old commentary in his Pāli version. What he has done was to compose a new work of his own from the relevant matters of all the old commentaries on the first four Nikāyas. This new work is what we have now as the *Visuddhi-maggo*.

As the old commentary, said to have been extant upto his time in the language of the Island, has vanished, we do not know how far he has given us a true picture of the old commentary on these important subjects. The old or Sinhalese commentaries themselves were evidently the later version of the orginal Aṭṭhakathā brought into the Island by the Buddhist mission under the elder Mahinda. The original Aṭṭhakathā itself has been lost in the country of its origin and we have to depend on its third-hand retranslation or rather recast composition. Had Buddhaghosa given us a literal translation of these important subjects as these were treated in each of the four old commentaries with or

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without his work, he would have certainly rendered an invaluable service to the cause of Buddhism by providing matters next to the original ones.

Under these circumstances, our position unfortunately resembles the argument in a circle. We study the text; for its clarification we have to seek help in its commentary; on important topics the commentary refers invariably to the work of Buddhagosa; when we try to find out the authenticity of what the work says on some intricate points, we have to turn our attention to the relevant text. The text is said to be subject to the commentary for its clarification, and we are thus moving again in a circle with its commencement. This is because the intricate topics require a valid argument or a meditative insight for their comprehension, as far as the supernormal and supramundane subjects are concerned. Thus the commentary and work of Buddhaghosa are a great help as well as a hindrance to our right comprehension of the Master's thinking and teaching. Traditionally we have to depend upon his explanation for the understanding of the text. Even when we begin to do so, we fall imperceptibly into the habit of consulting the commentary and thence his work, with an uncritical mind.

It is for this reason that we have brought here, for illustration, the five instances of devotional expression before the reader. The method of evaluating them might suggest similar methods of doing so to other colleagues in future. The difficulty of determining the sequence of suttas given in different Nikāyas and even in the same Nikāya will be discussed in a later section. Here we shall deal with instances in the order of the Nikāyas with the suttas contained therein. But this order should not be regarded as actual, logical, or even desirable. These instances must have however occurred with regard to places and persons mentioned therein in spite of the uncertainty of sequence of time. This certainty of their occurrence however would be enough for our purpose. We give the five instances in the above mentioned order in the following sections.

The first Instance of Sakka, the Lord of Devas

The Sakka Pañha sutta, or the discourse on the question of Sakka (Śakra in Sanskrit), the leader or ruler of heavenly beings,

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given in the *Digha Nikāya* (II.8), provides us with one of the instances. "The Blessed one was once dwelling in the Indasāla Guha (or cave, which was situated) in the Vediyaka mountain and lying to the north of the Brāhmaṇa village named Ambasaṇḍā (which was) to the east of Rajagaha (the then capital of and) in the Magadha country." Sakka had wanted to visit the Master for a pretty long time on his own personal affair. He came down over there with a host of his retinue to pay a fitting visit to the Master. He, however, tactfully or diplomatically employed his court musician, Pañcasikha, Gandhabba-putta, to enter the cave at first and entertain the Master with his music before his own entry. This heavenly musician sang a pretty long love song closely interspersed with his appreciative reverence to Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha, and Arahanta or Adorable ones.

It is strange that the Master should have listened to a personal love song of a wierd musician involving his own love affair with Suriya-vacchasā (Sūrya-varcasā in Sanskrit), cr the suns' light, the wierd daughter of Timbaru the master-musician and the famous heavenly singer. Pañcasikha had sung the song accompanied with his stringed instrument, the Beluva-paṇḍu viṇā or lute. And the Master, at the end of the love song, made an appreciative remark that his sound did not divert from that of the lute and vice versa. The Master asked him as to when he had composed the song. He related to the Master his love affair and his gaining through this song one day's dating with the lovely but unresponsive damsel. The Master was amused with it. This lyrical gāthā or song is an exceptional one in the text itself only next to the episode of the three daughters of Māra. This amusement facilitated the meeting of Sakka with the Master. The conversation that followed the meeting showed that Sakka had come over there with some serious purpose in view. He declared that he achieved his purpose apparently more than he had hoped for.

Overjoyed, Sakka rubbing the ground with the hand uttered this udāna thrice "Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa," (Salutation to Him, the Blessed, the Adorable, the By-Himself Perfectly Enlightened One). Grateful to the musician, Sakka said to him:

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Dear Pañcasikka, You have been of great service to me . . . . I will place you in your paternal post. You shall become the 'Gandhabba-rājā' (the King of the heavenly musicians). And I give you the lovely Suriya-vacchasā. For, it is she that is desired by you (for, it is what you desire).

Previous to this event Sakka had sought an interview with the Master, when he was dwelling in the Salalagaraka (situated) in Savatthi . . . . . Sakka could not however have the interview then. For he was prevented by Bhujati, a maid-servant of Vessavana (Vaiśravaṇa in Sanskrit) or Kubera, the possessor of immense wealth and one of the four Maharajas protecting the four quarters of the earth. She was then in attendance on the Master and told him (Sakka) that it was not the proper time to see the Master, because he was absorbed in meditation.

On being reminded of that occasion by Sakka when the conversation began, the Master told him that it was in fact the noise made by the wheel of his chariot that had awakened him (the Master) from the Samadhi he was in. The attendant girl had also given to the Master the complimentary message left by the Sakka for him. Sakka, continuing the preliminary talk, informed the Master of the episode of a Shakyan girl named Gopikā. She was an inhabitant of Kapilavatthu and had followed the rules of śīla or virtue well. She had conducted meditation for a future state of manhood (though it is an unusual and difficult task). Accordingly, after her death, she was born in heaven as a male and acquired the sonhood of Sakka. Three bhikkhus of the Order of Monks in the meantime were also born after their death only as Gandhabbas inferior to the devas. When Gopaka Devaputta (the new name earned in heaven by Gopikā, the Shakyan girl), saw those three Gandhabbas, formerly the members of the Order, Gopaka became enraged at their attainment that was degrading in his eyes. He began to reproach them with vehemence. Thereupon, Sakka informed the Master further on, that two of them regained the memory (of their former meditative practice) and obtained the body of Brahmaloka.

The above description is hard to digest, but I have presented it in order to show that the six regions of the subtle sphere called Heaven are as infested with kāma or desire as our own world.

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The sixth region is wherein Māra with his host is said to dwell. It is the second one where Sakka rules. The main objective of Sakka's visit seems to have been the indication of the signs of his approaching disintegration. For, he declares before the Master after the conversation:

> Surely it is here Marisa! that I have obtained and regained (that is, lengthened) the life of myself (my own), while I stood and remained in my own Deva-being here (that is while I maintained myself as the Deva). O Mārisa! (Friend! a friendly term of address between heavenly beings) know this.....

In addition to this immediate benefit, Sakka gained other five benefits—those of foreseeing his future births and states of higher and supramundane significance. It is recorded that he gained then and there the Dhamma-Cakkhu or supramundane insight: "Whatever is produced is subject to cessation (destruction)." So did "the eighty thousand devas" his retinue consisted of.

Critical Study of Heavenly Beings

The rich details of this discourse make us almost forget its wholly supernormal nature or element. Had it not been the usual habit of the Master to recount such events by repeating them, to the congregation of monks or at least to Ānanda, the attendant monk, later on, we would have regarded these events as mere myths brought in to illustrate some religious tenet, or import, or end in view. But the seriousness of such accounts as these in the text makes us reflect over these, if or whether we can make analytical study of them. There are several reasonable grounds for our reflection. Firstly, the nucleus of such events must have originated from the psychic or psychological experience of the Master. It cannot be merely the play of imagination, inasmuch as none of the items of his meditative system include imagination as a component of any device for organizing them. This is evident from his declaration to Jānussoni Brāhmana in Sāvatthi, that he (the Master) was an 'asammoha-vihari' or an undeluded meditator, as contrasted with other Brāhmaṇas who were 'sammoha-vihāris' or deluded meditators, as recorded in

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the Bhaya-Bherava sutta (1.4), or the discourse on 'Fear and Terror' of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.

Secondly, the Master does not seem to have borrowed the heavenly system in Buddhism entirely from other oriental systems, inasmuch as the former differs in several respects from the latter. A close comparison of the two sides will disclose their significant difference. Even so is the case, if we compare the Buddhistic system with the *Yogasūtras's* system of the universe. For in the commentary, subcommentaries, and annotations on the 26th sūtra of the third part (Vibhūti-pāda) of the *Yogasūtra*, we find the points of agreement less marked than those of disagreement, though the system of the *Yogasūtra* it thought to resemble that of the Buddhistic yoga in some respects. To all appearances, the Buddhistic system of subtle universe was the result mainly of the Master's own meditative experience, because he has not mentioned authorities other than his own experience for his system. Under these circumstances, it is innconceivable that he should have created the whole system of the supernormal elements entirely through his imagination. We have seen how he has criticized, in the above sutta, the imaginative contemplation as the 'sammohavihāra' or deluded meditation of other Brāhmaṇas.

Thirdly, although the nature of these mysterious beings and regions they inhabit is not clear to us, the then intelligentsia seem to have tentatively believed the tradition and particularly the definite statement of the Master and his disciples relating to the existence of these beings and their unearthly abode. The learned men of those olden times are also said to have been even critical of these phenomena, if or when anyone claimed to have been them. The people also were seemingly not blind believers of them. It appears that these phenomena were fully believed in theory, but not uncritically when it came to do so in practice. Hence the conviction the people of those times display at these phenomena by their moods and expressions cannot be descredited so readily as we are likely to do very often. The text and the commentary give us lively descriptions of this "Śakka Devanām Indo" (Śakro Devanām Indrah) in a number of suttas. Sakka figures not only in connection with devas and asuras, but also in relation to particular men and people in general.

According to the story of the Master's first entry into Rājagaha,

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after the Enlightenment, given in the first Khandhaka of the Mahavagga of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, this mysterious being, called "Sakko Devānam Indo", assumed the form of a young man (Māṇavaka-vaṇṇam) and walked before the Buddha who was accompanied by the huge congregation of a thousand monks. Walking along the main thoroughfares and streets of the metropolitan city of Rājagaha, this handsome young man preceded the grand procession of begging monks headed by the Buddha, singing four gāthās in praise of the Blessed One as the august leader with the august led. Each gāthā has, at its end, the refrain: "Rājagaham pāvisi Bhagavā" or "the Blessed One entered Rājagaha." Besides paying high compliments to the leader, these gāthās also praise the old ascetics led by the Master. These "purāṇa jaṭilas" or old ascetics were formerly the disciples of the three Kassapa brothers who must have been regarded highly for their long practice of asceticism at Uruvela, Nadi and Gayā. The mentioning of these jaṭilas in the gāthā might have also greatly increased the curiosity of the populace.

The attention of the people was immediately drawn towards the singer: "Having said so: 'Handsome is this young man; good to look at is this young man; pleasant of appearance is this young man; whom this young man might belong to?" Having heard this remark, the young man replied to them in a gāthā that he was the servant of the Buddha. This answer from an exquisite singer must have necessarily directed the people's attention fully towards the Master. If the purpose of the heavenly being was to enhance the prestige of the Tathāgata, the purpose must have been splendidly accomplished by his timely appearance and appropriate song. The commentary, however, takes this appearance in order to clear the way of the Master through the crowd of the people.

The introductory story of the Jātaka-aṭṭha-kathā, however gives us the novel suggestion of a sort of rescue work performed by this Sakka. The *Nidāna-kathā* says that there was so much rush, in the street square and garden (of the city) of the curious people eager to get a glimpse of the Buddha that there was no room for a single monk (of the congregation) to pass on. It was to clear the way (through the crowd) before the Buddha who was heading the congregation of monks. That the mysterious person had suddenly appeared there. He cleared the way through the power

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of deva. The Master taking the way cleared by Sakka entered Rājagaha accompanied by one thousand monks. Obviously, the powerful being was competent enough to assume a form of human being like that of our own. We cannot, however, be sure of the body assumed by him as to what extent or degree it was solid, material, heavy and corporeal. The onlookers, however, thought: "We have never seen before this youthful person of uncommon handsomeness." It is the text and the commentary that claim the person as Sakka.

Sakka could also make himself visible to particular persons only. The commentary understands that the mysterious apparition, known as "Vajirapāni Yakkha," threatening Ambaṭṭha, the Brāhmaṇa student, as described in the Ambaṭṭha sutta (I.3) of the Digha Nikāya, was that of Sakka himself. The purpose of his appearance in a terrible form was to elicit an answer from an unwilling and reticent debater to the Master's question. Sakka had taken upon himself the duty of fulfilling his words given to the Buddha when the Blessed One was disinclined towards the preaching of dhammas. His words, however, were only an assurance that there were people in the world who would listen to his preaching. During a debate when the debator refused to answer a critical question of the Master, the apparition appeared, according to the said commentary on the above sutta, visible only to the debater and the Master, not to others. From what we know of Sakka as described in a number of suttas, it appears to be doubtful that he assumed the form of the formidable apparition mentioned above. It was textually Sahampati Brahmā who had requested the Master to preach, but the commentary includes Sakka also herein.

There are several reasons to make us disagree with the commentary, so far as the identification of the said apparition with Sakka, the Lord of Devas, is concerned. The Master to begin with, has not mentioned it anywhere in the suttas; Sakka has not alluded to it himself on any occasion when he paid a visit to and held conversation with the Master; the apparition has never spoken a word on any one of his sudden appearances excepting his lament at the passing away of the Master; the words, said to the Buddha by the Brahma, Sahampati that there will be listeners to the Dhamma, even if repeated also by Sakka, do not imply an

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extortion of an answer of so intimidating a nature. This kind of extortion rightly forestalled by the commentator would not have contributed favourably to the greatness of the Buddha. The apparition, however, used to appear on such occasions; the purpose was probably to execute the Buddha's threatening words; if the apparition was really that of a yakkha, this Vajira-pāṇi Yakkha must have been appointed by Vessavaṇa to protect the Master. For, yakkhas are generally regarded mythologically as working under Vessavaṇa or Kubera. We have already Bhūjati, the maid-servant of Vessavaṇa, attending on the Master. She must have been invisible to the ordinary eye and holding sufficient authority to prevent beings invisible to the human eye from intrusion or untimely entry into the Master's Gandha-Kuṭi or closet. Sakka was certainly prevented thus as mentioned above by her.

What is to be marked in this sutta is the conversation carried on between the mysterious being and the Master. Without the capacity of hearing the subtle words spoken by these beings, it would have been obviously impossible to conduct the talk with them. For, there is no record of these talks being overheard by other persons, though some persons are said to have seen some unusually bright light on these occasions. For example, Uruvelā Kassapa, the eldest of the three Kassapa brothers, saw the uncommonly bright light on three occasions, when the four Mahārājas or Protectors of the four quarters of the earth, Sakka the Inda or Lord of Devas, and Brahmā Sahampati visited the Master for listening to his preaching. The ascetic host, Uruvelā Kassapa, marvelled at the phenomena of uncommon brilliance and on the next morning asked the Master the cause of their appearance. He was told who the visitors were. This instance, as described in the Uruvela-Pāṭihāriya-kathā, or the story of miracles at Uruvelā of the first section and part of the Mahāvagga of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, clearly shows that these mysterious beings are generally invisible and their talk also inaudible to others.

The details of the mysterious phenomenon given above should clarify the point we are driving at. The point herein is that the supernormal element is unavoidable in almost all religions and particularly so in Buddhism. For we can scarcely conceive

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Buddhism without its inherent meditation and insight. The insight in Buddhism is supramundane in its content and also thereby basically supernormal, while Buddhistic meditation is patently supernormal when it is fully developed. Even in its preliminary stage, meditation in Buddhism is oriented to Nibbāna that is basically supramundane. Hence Buddhism cannot be conceived without supernormal elements that may or may not assume forms. For example, the meditative light generally seen or experienced by any meditationist is seemingly tinged with supernormalcy not fundamentally different from the developed phenomena of supernormal elements said to have been experienced by advanced meditationists. This subject, however, will be dealt with later on when we shall come to treat of the development of the divine eye (Dibba-cakkhu) or supernormal sight.

Three Instances of Spontaneous Utterance of Salutation

The Udāna or 'Utterance of Salutation', as described in the next to the preceding section, is obviously inconclusive. The best we can say is the tacit acceptance of this udāna by the Master without any remark or comment thereon. The least of such a supernormal experience as the said instance is decidedly a psychological event. And as such the udāna might be regarded as approved by the Master. This approval adds a significant importance to this formula not only for the purpose of an auspicious beginning, but also for that of repetition, if one is minded to do so, as a mantra. The close resemblance of this formula to the twenty-four-syllabled Vedic Gāyatri mantra in sentiment and cadence and to the famous twelve-syllabled mantra of the Viṣṇu cult in form is another charm to a devotee. The comparison may be made at a glance as follows:

"Tat Savitur Vareṇyam Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi", meaning '(I or we) meditate on that desirable lustre of the Sun, the Deva.' This is from the Gāyatri mantra. 'The lustre of the sun' herein may mean the meditative light of the cause of the world, while "tat" or 'that' includes the remotest universe. The mantra of Vāsudeva or Viṣṇu runs: "Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya," meaning 'Om, Salutation to the Divine One, Vāsudeva'. The first three castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya, among the Hindus, are duty-bound to repeat the Gāyatri mantra a number of times

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every day. In order to fulfil a certain high objective a sādhaka or practiser even repeats these mantras for a set number of years. Early Buddhism is, however, not inclined towards such practices. Had the Master shown even a little toleration of this sort of traditional practices, his system would also have been polluted with the profusion of mantras and their accompanying rituals. The allurement of mantras however, was, hard to remove even in early Buddhism. So we find the formula of worship to the Buddha in such wide currency and popularity.

Now to resume the topic under discussion, the succeeding instances to be given here are all collected from the suttas of the second part of the *Majjhima Nakāya*. In the instances found in and gathered from the suttas, we do not see any ordained monks or nuns involved in the discovery of the formula. They were ostensibly committed to the set form of repeating the glorifying prose pieces, viz. "Itipi so Bhagavā.....Buddho Bhagavāti," to the Master. This piece is first met with in the Bimbisāra-Samāgama Kathā No. 16 of the Mahāvagga (Vinaya). The piece was included in the fame of the Master.

The prose piece to the Dhamma appears to have been triggered off by the Master at the very first conversion in Isipatana (Sārnath). He initiated and ordained the first convert simply by "Ehi Bhikkhu" (Come, Monk). Svākkhāto Dhammo. . . . ." (Well described is the dhamma . . . . .). The full prose piece is, however: "Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo.....Viññūhi ti" (Well described by the Blessed One is the dhamma.....Knowable by the wise.) Even the first above piece must have been inspired by the Master's own declaration to the ascetic Upaka. The phraseology of the declaration is, however, much more significant that what is current in the set form. The original verse is in the Mahāvagga Kathā 6 and the first of the five stanzas of the verse is also given in Gāthā No. 353 of the *Dhammapada*. The prose piece, "Supaṭipanno.....Lokassā ti", to the Saṅgha (Order) appears to have been gradually formed and come into vogue.

The first of the said three suttas is the Piyajātika sutta (11.37). This event occurred when a controversy arose between King Pasendi of Kosala and his queen Mallikā Devi over the reported dictum of the Master. The dictum was that human sorrows are

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akin to love and desire and spring therefrom. This had been pronounced by the Master on the death of the only son of a householder in Sāvatthi. The son was also very dear to the bereaved father. The true and harmless precept fell unfavourably upon him. He resented it; several gamblers also supported his resentment. The news gradually reached the royal palace. The King intimated the thing to the Queen Mallikā was who a staunch lay disciple of the Master. The queen supported the Master's dictum, but the King disagreeing taunted her.

Thereupon the Queen sent a Brāhmaṇa named Nāḷijaṅgha to the Master dwelling then in the monastery of Jetavana in Sāvatthi. The Master related to the Brāhmaṇa fifteen cases of the same city when sorrow stemmed from love and desire. The Brāhmaṇa returned and reported the talk to the Queen. Thus informed, she brought home the truth of the precept to the King's comprehension by the five intimately affecting examples. Fully convinced and overjoyed, the King felt a sudden reverence for the Master and made a spontaneous utterance of the said Udāna thrice: "Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa".

The second instance is that of Brahmāyu (11.4), a Brāhmaṇa savant of Mithilā. He was an old man of one hundred and twenty years, well versed in three Vedas with the allied branches of knowledge including the scripture about the auspicious signs of great persons. The Master was then on an alms-begging tour (cārikā) with five hundred monks in the country of Videha. The Brāhmaṇa heard the Master's fame. To ascertain it correctly he sent his disciple named Uttara. This student was as learned as his teacher. He started from Mithilā and ultimately came to where the Master was on his way. He passed seven months in observing the auspicious signs of the Master as closely as he could. After seven months the māṇava (youth) returned home fully satisfied. He reported his findings to his teacher, Brāhmayu, who became overwhelmed with delight and uttered the said Udāna thrice: "Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa !!!"

The third instance is that of a Brāhmaṇī named Dhanañjāni, the wife of a Bhāradvāja (Gotra) Brāhmaṇa. She had somehow heard in her parents' village the said formula. This formula had so much attracted her and she was so habituated

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to utter it automatically that she could not keep herself from doing so, in spite of a warning or prohibition against it. This is found in the Saṅgārava Sutta (11.50). Her habit of uttering this udāna shows that it had already become popular in her parental village. By the by, the Master was then with a great congregation of monks on a cārikā tour in the Kosala country. At the time Dhanañjāni, the Brāhmaṇi, was living in the village named Cañcali Kappa. There also lived a young man, Saṅgārava by name and Bhāradväja by gotta (gotra, family). This husband of this wonderful woman belonged to die-hard conservative Brāhmaṇas who denounced Buddhist monks vehemently. The commentary on this sutta gives us an interesting story. In short, the story is given in the next section.

The Story of Dhananjani

"This Brāhmaṇi Dhanañjāni was the wife of a Brāhmaṇa, Bhāradvāja by gotta. This Brāhmaṇa formerly used to invite and honour other Brāhmaṇas from time to time. Having brought this Brāhmaṇi home, he could not enrage the mind of the woman, who was very beautiful and belonged to a great family (mahā-kula). Hence he could not honour other Brāhmaṇas.

It is also said that this Brāhmaāi was "Sotāpanna Ariya Sāvikā" or the earner of the first stage in the supramundane Dhamma.

Then other Brāhmaṇas taunted him, wherever they saw him, with the remark: 'You are a follower of Brāhmaṇa tenet; but now-a-days you do not honour Brāhmaṇas even for a single day.' Coming home, he intimated the Brāhmaṇi with this (taunt). He said (to her): 'If Bhoti (Bhavati, your ladyship or goodself) could control the mouth for one day, I would give alms to Brāhmaṇas for one day.' 'whatever you are to give, give it to your liking, what have I to do with it?' (was her reply). Having invited Brāhmaṇas and made (her) cook water-less milk-rice pudding (pāyasa) and cleansed the house and arranged the seats (for the guests), he made the Brāhmaṇas sit down (thereon).

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Having worn a fine dress, the Brāhmaṇi holding a ladle began to serve up (the food). Cleaning the corners of (her) dress and not even indicating that she was going to serve up, she suddenly remembered, through the force of habit, the Master and uttered the (said) udāna. The Brāhmaṇas hearing the udāna became angry and said: 'They are on both sides the partisan of Samaṇa Gotama; we will not accept their alms.' Leaving the food (untouched), the Brāhmaṇas went out. The Brāhmaṇa (then) said (to her): 'I had asked you already before that you should control the mouth to-day for one day. You have destroyed so much milk and rice'.

Being still greatly enraged, the Brāhmaṇa said: 'Thus this Vasali (you wretch) timely and untimely utters the praise of that Muṇḍaka (the shaven one) Samaṇa. This time, Vasali! I will put difficult questions to that Master of yours. Then the Brāhmaṇi said (to him): go you, Brāhmaṇa! Having gone (there), you will know (better)'.

The commentary records that this Brāhmaṇa went to the Master in an angry mood; but there he was readily converted by the Master. He sought and obtained initiation and ordination in the Order of Monks. In course of time, he obtained arhatship (arahattam). Hearing this unexpected conversion of his elder brother, Akkosaka (denouncer) Bhāradvāja went in a similar mood to the Master and was similarly converted. He also sought and obtained initiation and ordination and in course of time became an arhat.

In like manner his other two younger brothers, Sundarika and Piṅgala Bhāradvājas, successively approached the Master in a defiant mood, but were similarly converted by the Master. They also sought and obtained initiation and ordination in the Order. In due course of time, the said commentary informs us further that they also attained the state of arhatship. Thus this Udāna of Salutation and praise to the Buddha became the means of the conversion of these four brothers belonging to diehard conservative Brāhmaṇas. Saṅgārava Bhāradvāja was the youngest of the five Bhāradvāja brothers. This young man was likewise perturbed by and had a misgiving for his sister-in-law Dhanañjāni's uncontrollable habit of uttering the udāna so much resented in

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his circle. This is the background of this important Saṅgārava Sutta, in which we find the autobiographical reminiscene of the Master.

The commentary on this sutta or discourse neither gives us any information about the origin of this unique formula, nor how and where the Brāhmaṇi got it, nor her back-ground in her parental house. She was, according to the commentary, a Buddhist laywoman who had attained the first stage of the Nibbānic stream. In this stage one is expected to have a firm faith in the 'Ratanattaya' and accordingly to recite the usual passage in adoration or praise of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. But she was apparently captivated with by the new formula, in which salutation is paid to the Buddha alone. She could not have got the formula in her husband's family or in his circle of conservative Brāhmaṇas antagonistic to the Buddhistic cult. Hence she must have heard it in her parental family and circle. If so, the formula must already have had some currency and popularity before she adopted it so earnestly.

If the similarity or strange names be indicative of close relationship also in Pāli system of nomenclature, Dhanāñjani Brāhmaṇa of the Dhanañjāni sutta (II.47) of the *Majjhima Nikāya* shows some closeness in relationship with Dhanañjāni Brāhmaṇi of the Saṅgārava sutta as described above. The social position of the said Brāhmaṇa in the Kingdon of Magadha doserves to be called a "mahākula" or great family by the husband of our wonderful Brāhmaṇi. This Brāhmaṇa must have been a Buddhist convert of some importance worthy of being enquired of by Sāriputta, the principal disciple of the Master, when he was on a cārikā or alms-begging tour in the southern part of the mountain encircling the city of Rājagaha, the capital of Magadha. The Brāhmaṇa was, however, reported to be "cheating the king (Bimbisāra) in the name (by presenting the miserable condition) of the people (peasantry), and the people (peasantry) in the name (by showing the authority) of the King". The elder had expressed regret for this state of affairs.

The commentary on this sutta gives us an interesting detail of this cheating practice by that Brāhmaṇa, the collector of land tax or rent. It is a pity that no forceful voice of the clergy was

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ever raised against such official corruption and no effective steps were taken to eradicate it even in the time of the most Enlightened One. It is no wonder that the Buddha found taṇhā or craving to be the fundamental cause of the misery of the world; and he tried to uproot this craving from the heart of his audience, in order to remedy the ills of the miserable world. When seriously ill, this Brāhmaṇa desired to see Sāriputta who established him in the way to Brahmaloka or region, the much desired goal of conservative Brāhmaṇas.

The Master, however, took the principal disciple to task for this lapse of his, because the goal of a Buddhist was never a region in any one of the three planes of existence. "Thence forward," the commentary says, "(Sāriputta) saying (preaching) even a gāthā (consisting) of four pādas (padas or half lines) did not say (preach) it freed (estranged) from the four noble truths. The commentary adds hereto a supernormal element as well: "This (adverse remark disapproving the said lapse was said by the Blessed One, Bhagavā) with the intention, 'By going there (visiting the Brahmaloka) preach to him. The Elder (Sāriputta) also immediately going there preached the Dhamma to that Mahābrahmā (Dhanañjāni Brāhmaṇa?)." Evidently, the preaching of the Dhamma in Buddhism appears to be a very difficult task. So we see the difficulty of Buddhaghosa and his insistence on imparting his oft-repeated viewpoint to us.

Moreover, the close relationship of names is also confusingly seen in the Māgaṇḍiya Sutta (Suttanipāta IV.9), and (Majjhima II.25), and their commentaries, and also the episode of lady Māgaṇḍiyā in the Sāmāvati-vatthu of the *Dhammapada* commentary. Maganadiyā's parents and uncle and cousin are, each of them, called Māgandiya or Māgaṇḍiya. They were of the Kuru country and had played some role better or worse. Her parents and cousin became arhats; she and her uncle with all her relatives perished in the Kosambi tragedy miserably.

Thus our Brāhmaṇi, Dhanañjāni, might have been related to this Dhanañjāni Brāhmaṇa of Rājagaha. At any rate the circle she was brought up in must have been well-versed in Vedic and Buddhistic culture to have appreciated the grandeur of the new formula. Among other things, the exquisite beauty and cadence of the formula might have infuriated, by its analogy to the

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Vedic ones, the die-hard conservatives. Many Pāli textual prose paragraphs bear excellent cadence comparable to that of the Vedic verses; but the lack of regular metre therein might have prompted some Buddhist scholars to turn at least a few of them into regular Vedic metres, in spite of the prohibition (Vinaya II.5.16). So we have several instances of impromptu verse in the text itself, even appreciated and encouraged by the Master himself. But he was seemingly aghast at the suggestion of some Vedic enthusiasts to convert all his words into Vedic chanda (metre; and, the Commentary says, language). This conversion of Buddhavacana (word or speech of the Buddha) into Vedic metre (or language) would have completely obscured the original purity and sentiment of the Master with that of the Vedic traditional ones. Hence the Master reprimanded the two brothers Yameḷu Tekulā, who expressed their desire to do so and forthwith prohibited any attempt to do so in future (Culla-vagga V.16 Vinaya as mentioned above).

The Last of the Five Instances

The last but not the least in significance is the spontaneous utterance of Kāraṇapāli Brāhmaṇa in Vesāli, as reported in the Kāranapāli Sutta (5.20.4) of the Aṅguttara Nikāya. The account in short is this: "The Blessed One (Bhagavā, Bhagavān in Sanskrit) was once dwelling in the Kūṭāgara sālā (situated) in the great forest of Vesāli. . . Kāraṇapāli Brāhmaṇa was doing some repair work for the Licchavis (the hereditary princes of Vesāli). . . ." He saw Pingiyani Brāhmaṇa coming from afar... When the latter came near him, he accosted the latter and asked him where the latter had come from. This initiated a lively conversation on the excellent quality of the Master's preaching. Overjoyed at the information the former got from the latter about the Master and his competence, the former, Kāraṇapāli Brāhmaṇa, joining his hands, towards the direction of the Master, uttered the udāna of the said formula thrice.

The commentary on this sutta gives us some information about the latter. This Brāhmaṇa, Piṅgiyāni, was a regular visitor to the Master. He was not only a Buddhist convert layman, but also an earner of the third stage of the Nibbānic path and fruit. The former, Kāraṇapāli, evidently had not had the

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opportunity of listening to the Master preach. Hence the udāna, uttered so spontaneously by him, must have a been product of sudden elation and effort to express his emotion. This will certainly presuppose a framework already existing in his mind that facilitated the formula to be spoken out so readily. This must have been due to the analogy we have already drawn the readers' attention to.

We do not, however, know which of these five instances should be regarded as the earliest and/or as the most significant. For the usual prose passage describing the Buddha's fame contains the sentence, "Itipi so Bhagavā Arahan Sammā Sambuddho...Buddho Bhagavāti", from the first part of which the said formula can be formed. But it must have needed genius, acumen, and devotion of the exclaimer or utterer to convert it at an opportune moment. This udāna was uttered at five places, out of these we are not sure of which was the first in point either of place or of time. The event and utterance nonetheless seem to have actually occurred excepting, if we like, that of the 'Sakka Pañha' sutta mentioned above in the section, "The First Instances of Sakka, the Lord of Devas." The exception of this sutta is, however, not to be taken as a denial of or doubt on its authenticity or importance.

The discussion over this formula of salutation was conducted to show that the Buddha's system of meditation does not lack the device of devotional aspect so highly treated of in the Yogasūtra, if we desire to try it. Although we do not find any device in early Buddhism that corresponds to the highly devotional element in other systems of meditation, the emergence and acceptance of this unique formula as an appropriate appreciation of the Buddha should not be regarded lightly. We are not going to discuss here the philosophical aspect or bhakti or devotion that is not to be found in early Buddhism.

Nevertheless, we shall consider in a later section the devotional device of acquring meditative states and powers as an alternative to regular devices as mentioned in the first part of the *Yogasūtra* and expounded in its commentary and subcommentaries. The mention of this device is made in sūtras numbered 23 to 29 in the first part and seriously integrated in its yogic system. Devotion to yoga might be interpreted as

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devotion to its originator also. And as such the formula under discussion may excellently fit in this situation.

Significance of Introductory Salutation

The tradition of introductory salutation in the beginning of almost all the yogic works should be taken not for a mere formality of laconic introduction, but for an earnest prayer to the originator of the system of yoga the work, or works fundamentally belongs to. No writer on yoga ancient or modern can claim to know the particulars of it more or better than the originator of the particular yoga whoever he or she might be. The originator is thought to be a real person or a mystic identity with the inner consciousness of living faith and belief, held by and among the practisers of yoga on traditional lines.

Yoga is always a serious thing and no one should ever play frivolous tricks with it. The introductory salutation is in effect a guarantee from the writer that whatever will be written in the work proposed or under way will be the truth and nothing but the truth. The content of the truth is probably relative, and thus the truth of a particular writer might be his or her own notion of it. Whether we agree with his viewpoint or not, the writer will never fail to convey the message from his inmost heart to us.

Traditionally the guru or the immediate preceptor or practical yoga or yogic device has been highly regarded in Oriental systems of yoga. In Buddhism, the Buddha is said to be the "Sattha Deva manussānam" or Master of Divine and human beings. He thus fulfils the overall role of the Supreme Guru. The reason for such a role given to a spiritual teacher in the orient lies in the disciples' hope of getting everything their teacher knows and possesses and that in the way of a short-cut. The secret reason is the belief of or in the transference of mystic power from the teacher to the taught. The tradition of ordination may point to this. In yoga the disciple finds himself helpless without the guidance of a teacher and even with it seeks a short-cut to a quick and ready means for yogic achievement. Consequently the disciple believes in such a transference of mystic power from the teacher.

Now the Buddha is no more before us. He has passed away

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into Nibbāna twenty-five centuries and a couple of decades ago. But still we hope that our rememberance and thereby invocation of him will bear a substantial fruit in the field of meditation, iddhi, and knowledge of liberation. The Master, however, has not given us any indication of such a high hope. His parting words are unequivocal: "Well now, monks! I tell you, all formations are subject to destruction; cultivate it (Dhamma) without negligence."

This last precept of the Tathāgata (the Buddha) is self-explanatory. We have to work for our own salvation and by implication for all other paraphernalia including supernormal power and branches of knowledge.

Yogasutra on Devotion to God

The Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali is definitely inclined towards the efficacy of yogic achievement through devotion to God. The God of the *Yogasutra* is, however, akin to the conception of the Ādi-buddha held in a certain sect of Mahāyāna Buddhism. When there is a way to salvation, there would be many persons attaining it. The possibility of innumerable number of persons liberated would pose an intricate question of the earliest one among them. The *Yogasūtra* (I.26) says that the

> "God (Iṣvara) is the Guru of (all) the earlier liberated (persons) also on account of non-limitation (of His) by time."
> The supposition of many persons liberated in the past would ultimately terminate in that of the earliest one, only if we make Him naturally liberated.
> So does the Sūtra (I.24) define the "God to be the specific Puruṣa (Pure Soul) untouched by any defilement, action, its fruition and impression."

Devotion to God is termed "Praṇidhana" (I.23) in the sūtra and not bhakti. It is the commentary of Vyāsa wherein this term is interpreted as 'specific bhakti'. Gained through specific devotion, the "God favours him (yogin) merely by meditative will." This is apparently a dogmatic expression; but devotion to unseen God means faith; faith makes it possible. If naturally

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liberated, the Supreme Being must be absolutely pure and unlimited. It would be extremely difficult to make contact with Him even by means of meditation.

The sub-commentators, viz. Vācaspati Miśra, Bhojadeva, Vijañāna Bhikṣu, Bhāvāgaṇeśa, Rāghavānada Sarasvati, Nāgoji Bhaṭṭa, and others, have all posited in a way that God had resolved in the beginning through compassion to help the devotees attain samādhi and liberation. The evidence of such an optimistic dogma is of course derived from relative scriptures which are plentifully found and advanced by them. But we would have liked them to give us some experience to corroborate it directly. This sort of proof can be available only in samādhi and that subjectively.

Miśra explain it thus:

> By means of 'specific devotion' (done) through mind, speech, and body, God is gained and attracted. God favours him (yogin) merely by (His) grace, by willing beforehand: 'Let it be as desired by this (yogin).' This is merely a will (of God) and nothing more than that.

This explanation shows that God has merely to make a standing resolve and not to make frequent ones for each individual yogin. The required devotion is however to be totally offered through all our three outlets of performance.

Bhojadeva or Bhojarāja interprets it as: :'Specific devotion (bhakti) or specific worship (upāsanā) is the dedication of all the actions (of the yogin) into Him. . . into the Supreme Guru". This dedication, he says, is that of the fruits of all the actions. This points to Karmayoga described in the third chapter of the Gītā.

Bhikṣu gives us a different interpretation of this devotion. He says: "Praṇidhāna herein is not what will be said in the second part (Ist and 32nd sūtras); but this is a particular contemplation of Samādhi casually productive of the supreme stage." This appears to be more rational than other views. For God in perennial samadhi would operate in the like psychic field; His mental operation would be recognised by a yogin, if it be possible at all, in samādhi alone.

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Bhāvāgaṇeśa and Bhaṭṭa have taken it into the traditional line of Brahmavāda or devotional Vedānta philosophy. And Rāghavānanda has also taken the same line with scriptural quotations. Rāmānada Yati has understood it as entirely indicative of bhakti. There is some fundamental difference between pure devotion and devotional Vedānta. Philosophical difference brings about some repercussion in the sadhāna or practice-stage as well.

A unique interpretation of this word however is, presented by Sadāśivendra: "Praṇidhana is a specific Bhāvanā (contemplation) in that Supreme Guru (God)...God favours...the puruṣa (individual soul) who is tormented in the burning coal of the world (Sansāra-aṅgāra)."

He further explains how the soul, although pure, suffers due to the soul's transformation into innermost mind (buddhi). This mind is made up of sattva (pure element of matter) and is tormented by rajas (active element of matter). When this sattva is tormented by rajas, the puruṣa (soul) also suffers due to its identification with the mind. Then he says: "Thus the supreme God (Parameśvara) by His own will (icchā) favours the suffering puruṣa (Practically the person) having Himself transformed into a nirmāṇa-kāya (or created body)."

This is certainly an explanation in line with yogic power and manifestation. In the bhūmikā (preface) to the relative work, it is said about this annotator that he was famed as a yogirāja in the Deccan of India. He has, however, annotated the *Yoga sūtra* following the Maṇiprabhā (the sub-commentary of Rāmānanda Yati). He has done so especially by way of exposing some experienced yogic contrivances. If it be really so, it is certainly laudable. For no matter, whatever be the outlook, yogic experiences are worth close study.

Evidently Bhikṣu's interpretation of devotion is more rational from the viewpoint of yogic samādhi than Miśra's traditional approach. Others' philosophical interpretation is also not amenable to yogic purposes. The mystic interpretation of Sadāśivendra will need authenticated instances to substantiate what he has said about the Nirmāṇa-kāya of the Primordial Liberated Soul. It is to be noticed that the God of the *Yogasūtra* would be virtually the Earliest Liberated Being. The *yogasūtra* has

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tried to establish it as the God scripturally and philosophically conceived.

In the Buddha's system of meditation, this sort of primodial liberated being was never and nowhere met with by him. The philosophical facet about divinity is not acceptable to the Master. Hence the question of devotion to the unseen and unknown Supreme Being does not arise in his system. The Master has neither categorically denied nor even implicitly affirmed the existence of any eternal Supreme Being. But the absence of any discourse about the existence or function of God in the *Tipiṭaka* has been understood as the non-existence of God. But it does not mean that devotion or adoration to any higher being or beings is devoid of merit, profit, or fruit. The Buddha's system of meditation would, therefore, check, correct, or upgrade them, but never denounce them.

Identification of God

No endeavour has ever been made for identifying the God of one system with that of another system. We appear to take it for granted that every system that accepts God must have meant the same God in spite of differences in His characteristics, attributes, and qualities. For example, God and Goddess, so widely worshipped in the different religions of the Orient, cannot be identical. The conception of masculinity is after all present in the first, while that of feminity in the second. Godship is of course the same in both these cases.

When we compare Godship in the Orient with that in the Occident, its conception appears to divert markedly. It is doubtful, if Godship is identical in the different systems of theistic philosophy. In spite of this sort of uncertainty about the identity of God, Goddess and Godship, we believe in the existence of God. But when we come to His function, an unsolvable problem confronts us on each fact of this divine function and operation.

In Buddhism, the function of creating the elementary dhammas is not ascribed to any cause other than the chain of dependent origination (paticca-samuppāda), far less to any being howsoever supreme. For no being is beyond the range of destruction. It is strange that we do not find a single sutta in the Pāli *Tipiṭaka*

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about God as conceived by us. What we find is a symptomatic phrase in Pāli "Issara-nimmānahetu" or 'due to the cause of creation by God' (Issara, Iśvara); this notion probably held by Niganṭhas was refuted in toto.

The above phrase is found in the Devadaha sutta (III.1) of the Majjhima and the Titthāyatana sutta (Nipāta III. 7.1) of the *Aṅguttara*. The Niganṭhas and Titthiyas are said to have held the theory: "Whatever pleasure or pain or neutral (of both) this individual person feels is all due to the cause of the creation by God (Issara nimmānahetu)."

No question about the existence of God is raised. It is however implied that God exists, creates, and causes individual persons to feel pleasure or pain or neutral or both.

The Niganṭhas in the first sutta are refuted by the Master on the ground that, if they feel or experience pleasure or pain due to God's creation, they are condemned (by their own statement). For they would have been created by an evil one, on account of which they experience the feeling of pain arising from their severe and bitter penance. They are silenced; but this or a like argument does not or would not solve our problem.

The second sutta presents the view point of the Titthiyas (non-Buddhist doctrinaires) as stated in the above paragraph (Issara-nimmāna-hetu). The refutation of this view point by the Master is a little more detailed than that in the first sutta. The Master explains the position to his disciples, monks, thus:

> Then they (Titthiyas) will become the killers (murderers) due to the God's creation, the stealers (thieves) . ., the adulterers . . ., the liers . . , the back-biters . . , the harsh-speakers . . , the frivolous talkers . . , the greedy . . , the malevolent . . , the holders of wrong doctrine due to the God's creation.

The position the Master appears to take here, may be summarised simply thus: If God has created all we find in the world, then evil things will also have to be included in God's creation. If there are evil things here, then creation itself is evil. If creation is evil, then the Creater will also have to be taken as evil. Hence the doctrine of creation by God would be untenable.

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In the Master's time the Brāhmaṇas seem to have worshipped the Brahma as personal God and Brahmaloka as the most desired abode after death. Philosophy among wandering scholars and asceties was limited to metaphysical discussions about soul, consciousness, world, and life after death. None of them is found to discuss a philosophic or impersonal God. It is a pity that the monks have never put to the Master a question about God and His existence.

Metaphysical Conception of Sankhya and Yoga

Yoga philosophy follows Sāṅkhya in its entirety excepting the admission of God in its system. So it is sometimes called 'Seśvara Sāṅkhya' or Sāṅkhāya with God. God in the *Yogasūtra* has already been discussed above. Now we shall take up the metaphysical conception of Sāṅkhya in order to find out whether or not it helps us to understand that of early Buddhism.

The expounder of Sāṅkhya philosophy is said to be Sage Kapila. His doctrine is given by Iśvara-Kṛṣṇa in seventy kārikās in the Āryā metre. The author says in the last stanza that this knowledge was imparted by Muni (Sage Kapila) to Āsuri who gave it to Pañcaśikha. It was the latter who enlarged it in a multi-tantra. It consisted of sixty tantras (scriptural or textual treatises or subjects). The author says that he has given in these seventy karikās the gist of all those sixty tantras without giving the stories (ākhyāyikās) and the (refuted) theories or doctrines of others. All those tantras, however, are lost.

This doctrine recognizes only two principles, conscious and unconscious, in the world. The unconscious principle includes both mind and matter. Mind is, therefore, unconscious of itself in this system. So is it in yoga philosophy also. The only conscious principle is the soul or self-termed 'Puruṣa'. Buddhism totally discards the conception of this Puruṣa; mind is, so to say, self-conscious. This difference is to be noted well. For doctrines recognizing the soul (as the only conscious principle will regard the mind fundamentally as the unconscious medium of the conscious soul.

The Yoga philosophy of Patañjali also accepts the same view of 'mind' as the Sāṅkhya does. The four sūtras, 19th to 22nd, of the fourth part of the *Yoga sūtra* definitely argue this point.

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The purpose of regarding the mind as unconscious is to establish the soul as an immutable conscious principle; for the fluctuating mind, if taken as self-conscious, would directly contradict the theory of the immutable soul. Any meditationist can check it with a little introspection and see the anomaly of double or dual consciousness.

But the theory of the unconscious aspect of mind may also indirectly help us in meditation to organize an egoless contemplation, if the idea of the puruṣa be set aside. For our mind and body would be regarded as unconscious and the puruṣa is theoretically also unperceivable. Hence in yogic practice any dogma is a hindrance. The Master appears to have seen it clearly beforehand.

To resume the topic the Sāṅkhya doctrine also starts from widespread suffering (Duhkha, dukkha in Pāli); for, owing to the presence of suffering the desire for knowledge arises (Kārikā 1). There exists Prakriti or primal nature; it consists of three guṇas or constituent characteristics or integral properties which are not separate from Prakriti, it is the object (not subject); it is unconscious (acetana); but is amenable to evolving (prasravadharmi). This evolution is due to its inherent guṇas (integral properties). Hence it is not inert, but capable of being changed when it is disturbed in its state of equilibrium.

Prakriti is virtually matter in its original and essential form; it is inert when it is in a state of perfect equilibrium of the three guṇas standing still. When these guṇas are active, the equilibrium is disturbed. Then the evolution of the world sets in. The guṇas are termed satta, rajas, and tamas (light, active, and dark integral properties). The Prakriti and its inherent guṇas are not directly known, but only inferred from the manifest effects. The Yoga philosophy also accepts the Prakriti and guṇas. Buddhism recognizes none of them; the evolution of the world takes place, but it is said to be by way of natural laws.

The first emergence from the disturbed and evolving Prakriti is said to be the great element (Mahātattva). This element is predominantly composed of sattva guṇa, the best part in Prakriti. This guṇa is light, radiant, and conductive to happiness. Hence the mahat is the best product or transformation of Prakriti. The higher mind or buddhi or intellect manifest in

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individuals is the mahat. The puruṣa, as the seer or perceiver or knower, sees or knows whatever this buddhi or intellect presents in itself.

In Buddhist psychology, mind consciousness is known by itself, there is no other knower. The supposition of an immutable knower from the mind is not recognized in Buddhism. There is therefore no overlapping of any two phases or moments of mind-consciousness.

From the mahat-tattava or great element there comes out the ahaṅkāra or ego. In Sāṇkhya the ego is inherent, but unconscious of itself, while in Buddhism this ego is extraneous and hence easily amenable to removal and eradication. In yoga the method of reversion is recommended for such removal (II.10 Sūtra).

This ahaṅkāra generates two lines of transformation, one is the mind (means) with two groups, each of five organs, the other is the five subtle elements (tanmātrās). These two groups are the five organs of sense (jñāna-indriya) and the five organs of action (karma-indriya). The idea of tanmātrās or subtle elements is also inferential and inferred from gross elements.

The mountain is, for example, a collection of earth particles; it is gross; the particle, however, is composed or constituted of five subtle elements. These are called as śabda, sparśa, rasa, and gaṅdha, or sound, touch, form and colour, taste, and smell respectively. The lake is a collection of water particles each composed of four subtle elements excluding smell. The conflagration of five is a collection of five particles, each composed of three elements excluding smell and taste. The gust of wind is a collection of air particles, each composed of two elements only, touch and sound. The open sky is a collection of sky particles, each composed of one element only, sound.

The tanmātrās are thus inferred from our perception of their effects. The manifestation is the whole universe composed of five material elements, viz. earth, water, fire, air and sky. The total number of elements, gross and subtle, comes to twenty-four. The Sāṅkhya philosophy shows and directly proves, the Yoga indirectly, and Buddhism both directly and indirectly proves that, without introducing the conception of God as the creator, the riddle of the universe can be explained, solved and understood.

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In Buddhistic classification of matter, there are four, instead of five, material elements, the sky or space is regarded only as the absence of these four elements. Like Sāṅkhya, Buddhism takes the subtle elements, instead of a gross collection of them, as fundamental, but the tanmātrās are not stated, and only indirectly implied in the corresponding five gocara-rūpas, viz. sadda, phoṭṭhabha, rūpa, rasa and gaṅdha in Pāli. If the theory about Soul (Puruṣa) be set aside, the metaphysical conception of Sāṇkhya and Buddhism, and if that about God (Puruṣa viśeṣa, Iśvara) be set aside, that of yoga and Buddhism would show wonderful similarity in metaphysical conception.

Five Means of Accomplishing Siddhi

The *Yogasūtra* (IV.I) mentions five principal means of accomplishing Siddhi (Iddhi in Pāli). These are birth (janma, jāti in Pāli), auṣadhi (osadhi, medicament), mantra (manta, vijja, spell), tapas (penance) and samādhi. The purpose of introducing these five types of siddhi here is differently mentioned by different sub-commentators. Miśra says: "it is to determine the (kind of) mind inclined to liberation (Kaivalya)". Bhoja-rāja or Bhoja Deva says: "it is to assure that there is no loss (hāni) to samādhi; for all these (five) siddhis are brought or come about by the force of samādhi practised in previous births; these means are merely the (immediate) cause". Bhikṣu says: "it is to show the superiority of samādhi-siddhi over other siddhis." Bhāvāgaṇeśa and Nagoji or Nāgeśa Bhatta says: "it is to show the superiority of samādhi-siddhi over other siddhis" (as Bhikṣu has said). Rāmānanda Yati and Sadā-Śivendra say: "it is to state the (kind of) mind competent for liberation, and to prove the nature of liberation principally."

The above varied opinions would show that there are other means, besides samādhi, to acquire siddhi. Now 'siddhi through birth' is patent. Birds can fly in the air; heavenly beings are endowed with many spiritual powers. This sort of siddhi is more or less permanent. Siddhi through (some particular) medicament is also known; there are several cases about its occurrence, possession, and attainment reported in the Pāli text and commentary. But we cannot wait for an unpredictable birth in future. And an effective medicament also appears to be very

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hard to get. Hence these two means are not to be depended upon now.

'Siddhi through tapasyā' has a sound background, but the Bodhisattva's own experience of six years' austerities should warn us against it. 'Siddhi through mantra' is yet in vogue. Early Buddhism has nothing to indicate that this method was ever practised in earnest. But in latter Buddhism this was adopted and widely practised. As a matter of fact, every Vedic verse is regarded as 'mantra' while almost the whole of the fourth (Atharva) Veda contains 'mantra' in a popular sense. In the Tāntric rituals, 'mantra' occupies a prominent place. Besides the scriptural place, mantra has also a secure place in popular exorcism and occultism. It is certainly impossible to extricate the people's belief from the mantra complex even now, nor was it possible in those remote times.

For instance, the meaningless words: "Āḷānatā Kusināṭā Parakusināṭā Nāṭasuriya Parakusiṭānata" and "Tatolā Tattalā Tatotalā Ojasi Tejasi Tatojasi" in the Āṭanāṭiya sutta (III. 9) of the Digha Nikāya are obviously mantras incorporated in the scripture. But these words were presumably never separated, for repetition, from the main sutta. As a comparison, the 21st chapter of the *Saddharma Puaṇḍrika*, one of the nine Buddhist sacred books of Nepal, gives a mantra of the dhāraṇi (protection) category said to have been uttered by Vaiśravaṇa before the Buddha on the Gridhra-kūṭa mount in Rājagriha. The rakkhā (protection) of the above Pāli sutta was also uttered by Vessavaṇa (Vaiśravaṇa) before the Buddha on the Gijjha (Gridhra) kūṭa mount in Rājagaha. The words of the dhāraṇi are as follows:

"Aṭṭe naṭṭe vanaṭṭe anade nāḍi kunaḍi svāha". [Saddharma-puṇḍarika, translated by H.Cern (1909) Oxford at the Clarendon Press, page 373]. But in B.S. Text No. 6 we find: "Aṭṭe taṭṭe naṭṭe vanaṭṭe anade naḍi kunāḍi svāhā."

The first group of Pāli words is seen to bear a sort of resemblance to the Sanskrit words. The last word 'svāhā' is generally added at the end of a mantra as an indication of offering to deity.

Philosophic Basis of Mantra in Yogasutra

We have discussed the popularity of mantras among the

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people in the preceding section. We could have readily discredited these meaningless words contained in mantras, had we not found some serious attempts made by competent persons of renowned reverence at defending some of these numerous mantras. One of these few cases is the time-honoured 'Praṇava' or the sacred syllable 'Aum' or 'Om' pronounced long.

The *Yogasūtra* says (I. 27): "His (God's) indicator (name) is Praṇava." The commentary of Vyāsa arguing this point says:

> God is the indicated (meaning) of Praṇava. Is the indicated-indicator of this (Praṇava) expressed (here) by sign (saṅketa, usage) only, or is it established like the lamp and (its) light? The relation of the indicated (vācya) with the indicator (vācaka) hereof is fixed. For the sign of God brings the fixed meaning only as the relation of the father and the son is fixed and this (relation) is expressed by the sign, as this is his father and that is his son. Even in the next creation (of the world after its destruction), the power of (expressing) the indicated indicator (relation) exists and likewise the sign is made thereby. Due to the permanence of the (recurring) occurrence (of this relation), the relation of word and its meaning is permanent and the authoritative savants (āgamins) assert this.

The above statements appear to us to be dogmatic; for in short they would amount to this: "A significant word expresses a certain meaning; the meaning includes a definite object; the relation of the word and its meaning and thereby the indicated object is fixed for good from one creation to the next." This would make the Praṇava an eternal name of God; the relation of this 'Oṇkāra' (Om sound or letter) and the indicated God would remain fixed for all time to come. This relation has been fixed by God. All the sub commentators and annotator have emphasized this point.

Miśra says:

> Herein others might see that, if the relation of word and its meaning be natural, then by the sign (usage) the meaning will have to be sought; as this word indicates this meaning . . therefore the indicator is made by the sign . . This is the

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purport: all words are capable of indicating all their meaning; it is fixed ...this is the natural relation. The sign of God, however, is the indicator and controller of this (relation) . . . Hence in the succeeding creations also there is the similar sign.

That is to say, the relation of the word and its meaning is eternal (nitya).

Bhojarāja says: "This relation is eternal; by the sign it comes to light (knowledge), it is not done by anyone. So it is automatic. The explanation of Bhikṣu is the most extensive. He says:

The name of this God is Praṇava . . . The indicated-indicator connection of God with Praṇava is eternal... This sign does not become mundane. Instead, the omniscient power of Consciousness following the previous accomplishment makes the sign... Because, otherwise, there will be distrust in the meaning of words everywhere.

Other annotators also have emphasized the point of this relation to be eternal.

The sum and substance of the whole argument on this sūtra is that the Praṇava is an eternal indicator of God indicated by this 'Oṅkāra' (Om sound or letter). From this, the basis of at least this mantra to be the true indicator of God is seemingly founded. But we do not meet this facet of theistic devotion in the Pāli Tipiṭaka. This basis, however, leads to the next sūtra (I.28).

"The repetition (japa) of it (Praṇava) (and) the contemplation (bhāvanā) of its meaning "(tranquillize the mind). The commentary explains it: "The repetition of Praṇava and the contemplation of God indicated by Praṇava, means that the yogin who repeats Praṇava and contemplates the meaning of Praṇava accomplishes the concentration of mind." Here 'japa' is to pronounce it properly, says Bhojarāja. Other sub-commentators have taken for granted that it is to repeat the syllable. All of them have dealt with its second part, the contemplation of its meaning.

Miśra says: "Bhāvanam means to contemplate it in the mind

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again and again. By doing so, concentration is achieved . . ." Bhojarāja also says the same thing. Bhāvāgaṇeśa says that it is Praṇidhāna in the form of dhāraṇā, dhyāna, and samādhi (termed samyama in III.4 sūtra). Sadāśivendra says significantly: By repeating it . . . with pre-dominantly practised contemplation . . . thereafter automatically the speech activity immerses into it . . ." Bhikṣu has fully dealt with this subject. He says among other things:

> Having shown the aṅga mantra of Praṇidhāna, the author of sūtras is going to describe the nature of Sāṅga (complete) Praṇidhāna . . . yoga and japa together are not possible. Japa is told to do in the time of rising (coming down from samādhi), the beginning, and the end of yoga (samādhi). His critical views on the accepted tenets of Vedānt philosophy are worth consideration.

The discussion of this topic might have shown that the repetition of a spell (mantra) accompanied with its inherent conception may produce wonderful results. The mantra, even though its words or syllables, might look meaningless, but it should not be forgotten that its inherent conception, when repeated numerous times, might prove formidable in its effect. Hence the safest course for us is to adopt yogic regular practices in preference to mantras and their sādhanā along irregular lines.

Natural Basis ot Siddhi

We have already seen how the *Yoga sūtra* has mentioned five means of siddhi (IV.1 Sūtra) in previous sections. Let us see how far they are useful for us at present. Now 'siddhi through birth' is patent. A bird can fly in the air, if this power be taken for a sort of siddhi, the bird gets it through birth. By appropriate result-bearing action and pious resolve, we can get some siddhi in the next birth. But this rebirth complex is unpredictable and also not currently congenial to us.

Medicament of desired efficacy is said to be available only in some mythical region or obtainable through occult science and chemistry. Hence this is unsuitable. The means of a spell (mantra) on the other hand has a long history of its own. Many

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wonderful things are said and heard about its efficacy. But the sādinā (practice) of mantras is not simple and easy; many hundred thousands of repetitions of a particular mantra are stipulated; other auxiliary paraphernalia are also prescribed; a blind belief in and a long perseverance for its pursuance might be needed from the sādhaka (practiser) of mantra.

Consequently, this kind of basis for siddhi is not suited to our modern temperament and learning. Nevertheless the proper manner of repeating a mantra in the form of one syllable or more syllables than one, or a formula containing significant words, or a dhāraṇi consisting of a passage, might however often determine the degree of success the mantra is said to secure for it repeater. This would be possible only if the appropriate contemplation relative to the mantra is also conducted. Hence a mantra would be only auxiliary and thereby secondary to contemplation.

Nevertheless we should not undervalue the efficacy of a mantra. The strong faith of an enthusiast might accumulate some factors of samādhi and generate the desired item of siddhi. The commentary on the relative sūtra (IV. I) mentions the attainment of movement through the sky and eight kinds of siddhi (ākāśa-gamana-animādilābha) by means of mantras. But the two sub-commentaries are however silent on the mantra-siddhi. Early Buddhism on the other hand, places no importance on this fact of 'iddhi'. Although we meet therein with the word "Buddha-mantra", the word used as a puzzle in a debate, means the Buddha's doctrine stated in significant numerical items. For example, 'all beings are dependent on food; this is (Principle No.) one; etc. During the six years' austerities, the Bodhisattva had seemingly never tried any mantras. The Buddha has likewise never taught anyone, nor mentioned, for regular practice, a mantra as we understand it by this word at present. An exception is, however, made in the Aṭṭhakathā (Pāli commentary) touching the classical instance of the elder Cūḷa Panthaka. The Master is said to have handed him a rag of white cloth and asked him to repeat the word "Rajo-haraṇam", meaning 'Let the dust be removed'. The repetition is said to have ultimately given him an iddhi of performing self-multiplicity. But this word does not look like a

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mantra. Probably this word was an interpretation of a real device.

'Tapas' has acquired a variety of meanings, but it is mostly associated with austerity. 'Tapas' is one of five items of 'niyama' (observation) and therein (II. 32) means 'endurance of extremes' (dvanda-sahanam). In the subsequent sūtra (II. 43) it means that 'tapas' secures the accomplishment of 'kāya-siddhi and 'indriyasiddhi; the first siddhi relates to eight siddhis and the second one to the extraordinary (dūrāt, from afar) power of hearing and seeing. 'Tapas' as one of the five means of siddhi, is said to be the means of acquiring saṅkalpasiddhi (Siddhi through resolve), which resembles the 'adhiṭṭhāna iddhi' in Pāli literature. The subcommentary of Miśra gives us a short sentence of great importance. It says: "Wherever the yogin desires to hear or to perceive (Mantum, that is, to touch, to taste, and to smell) therein the yogin hears and perceives (manute)." And it includes "seeing etc." The corresponding word "mantum, manute" in Pāli signifies the perception of touch, taste, and smell. So the siddhi of hearing, seeing, and perceiving functions irrespectively of physical outer medium and distance; the yogin is capable, according to Misra's exposition, of hearing sound, seeing visions, and perceiving some thing in contact with (sampatta-vasena in Pāli) the appropriate sense-organs, directly without the intervening media-ever obstructing the path of the reception of the yogin's senses.

To all appearances, the real basis of siddhi even through 'mantra' and 'tapas' seems to be samādhi directly or indirectly brought about to effect the particular phenomenon of siddhi. But the natural basis of effecting siddhi appears to be an established state of samādhi. All the extraordinary phenomena of siddhi to be organized through "samyama, the unification of "dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi," as described in the 4th sūtra of the third (vibhūti) part, are obviously producible, only by samādhi that is preceded by 'dhyāna' and 'dhāraṇā. These phenomena are dealt with in the Vibhūti-pada' of the *Yoga-sūtra.* Even the principal alternative of 'devotion of God' has been shown, in previous sections, to be basically samādhic in nature. So we have really no alternative to samādhi for the attainment of siddhi, samādhi siddhi (11.45), and 'kaivalyam'

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(III.55, IV. 34). These things are certainly worth trying, even if it be to meet the challenge of ancient yogins, mystics, and even our own inner consciousness to us, moderners.

Conclusion of Traditional Introduction

Our main endeavour in this chapter has been to investigate the possibility of finding a clue to the supernormal power of sense-consciousness. There are numerous instances of supernormal hearing and seeing in the original text and commentary of Pāli literature and Buddhistic Sanskrit scriptures. In the absence of a definite clue to these powers, we naturally feel uneasiness about the authenticity of these instances. So we tried to see whether or not the widespread custom of auspicious beginning with the oriental writers discloses some secret. In the course of our research we found that the formula of worship or adoration the writers of works on serious subjects use in the beginning or their works is well chosen and has a long history behind it.

Thus the Buddhistic formula, "Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambudhassa", meaning 'Salutation to Him, the Blessed One, the Liberated One, the By-Himself Perfectly Englightened One', was proved to be an uncommonly significant one. This formula originated, as we have already learnt, in a spontaneous expression of adoration to or admiration for the Buddha singled out of the customary 'Ratanattaya' or Three Gems, the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. Generally the expression was uttered, in the absence of the Master, by a new convert to the Master's doctrine or a layman. This exquisite expression with cadence resembling that of Vedic mantras must have caught the imagination of the people acquainted somehow with the reading or repeating of Vedic mantras very quickly.

The Master had introduced the taking of refuge in Ratanattaya in his system not without due consideration over it. It is written that he thought, after his Enlightenment, over the subject as to whom he should respect. He found the Dhamma itself, discovered and realized by himself, worthy of his respect. He has also said that he had a sense of respect to his Saṅgha as well. Were it not so, there would have been little sense in taking refuge in the first case, that is, in an inanimate collection of

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dhammas or discourses and vinaya or rules of conduct. No one at present would take refuge in a modern library or the body of knowledge it contains, so to say. Similarly, the Saṅgha being the body of his disciples would not have been recommended by the Master for refuge, should he have felt no respect for it. The Saṅgha is really a living force of yogic and spiritual power generated and preserved by arhats known and unknown. As such, the recommended refuge in it, in other words, the spiritual help sought from it is, from common-sense also, not without significance.

The Buddha is decidedly far above his disciples. The commentary understands that he is not included in the Saṅgha. For, whenever he is included in it, the usual term used was 'the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha (Buddha-pamukhasaṅgha).' He is said also to be superior to 'Pacceka-buddhas, who however do not appear in the Buddha's time. He has nonetheless recommended to his disciples, in the Isigili sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the recitation of the names of Pacceka-buddhas', in other words, the salutation to them. These five hundred (ṛṣis in Sanskrit), self-enlightened arhats, are said in the commentary to have been the sons of Theri Uppala-vaṇṇā in one of her past lives. The term 'Buddha' is above all full of significance and of wide implication. It connotes perfect enlightenment, liberation, omniscience, etc. and denotes each and every Buddha who had been in the past and will or might be in the future. Moreover, there is the possibility of some incomprehensible presence of the Buddha in the Nibbānic Void. Hence the formula of 'Salutation to the Buddha' is full of significance and so is its tacit acceptance by the Master.

The reason for his tacit acceptance is nowhere given. But it is probable that, by the passage of time, he became more susceptible to the confusion created in the mind of the people in general regarding the position of the Buddha in Buddhism than he was in the beginning. The people must have taken the Dhamma generally as the doctrines of the Buddha and not as he credited it with. And with the ever-increasing numbers of novices in the Order, the people might have been at a loss to evaluate these novices who were doubtlessly included in the Saṅgha. Moreover, the people were not all avowed to Buddhism, as we are now, by

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taking the triple refuge. So some formula of expressing one's appreciation of, admiration for, and adoration to the Master might have been felt as needful. And the spontaneous expression was thus universally acclaimed by the people. The Master likewise accepted it tacitly.

Mystically considered, the Buddha represents a specific liberated person with supernormal powers and knowledges. He was freed, at last, of the semblance of the body, and all his mental concomitants are said to have been extinguished forthwith with his decease. But it would be preposterous to think that he is totally extinct and no more. He has himself denied this sort of assertion, allegation, or dogmatism about himself from others. Higher spiritual contact is above dogmatism. If he be not beyond spiritual contact, other Buddhas also would be not beyond the same. This sort of supposition might have been the principal reason why the Master let the formula stand.

A close resemblance to such a supposition as the above-mentioned one was and is present in the conception of an ideal prototype of liberated persons with omniscience and omnipotence, formed and described in the *Yogasūtra* (1. 23.-39) and its commentary. We have therefore investigated the sūtras concerning the Supreme Being naturally liberated and endowed with omniscience. The mystic syllable 'Om' was said to indicate the name of the Being, and the repetition of this syllable was the topic dealt with further for our discussion. The Supreme Being of the *Yogasūtra* is so akin to the conception of the Ādi (Primordial) Buddha that we might be prompted to suppose the one was the imitation of, or the borrowing from, the other, or vice versa. But our short treatment of the metaphysical conception of the Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems should have shown that the process of this conversion, even if accepted tentatively, would or will have presented irreconcilable difficulties to savants on account of fundamentally different outlooks on metaphysical questions in the two systems.

Ultimately we came to the conclusion that the natural basis of siddhi or iddhi (riddhi in Sanskrit) cannot be other than that of samādhi as advocated in the Buddha's system and circumstantially in the *Yogasūtra* and its commentary. So we are now prepared to conduct research on the main topic of this phase,

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namely, the 'development of supernormal senses and manifestations' with one-pointed intent and purpose, from the next chapter. This long introduction is, however, meant to be an integral part of the main thesis and not an isolated portion of it.

Nevertheless we shall see, during the conduct of this research, that some sort of spiritual or mystical help is sought and felt as obtained by meditationists sooner or later. During the life-time of the Master, his disciples are said to have expected this sort of help from him, and obtained it through his subtle appearance before them. Even the Great (Mahā) Moggallāna was reportedly helped by the Master a number of times in this subtle manner before he was fully accomplished in the gradual trances. Hence this introduction constitutes an integral part of our thesis that help from supernormal powers is not beyond our reach. There is seemingly some possibility of superior beings being somewhere, probably within our own inner consciousness, who seem to help us from within, whenever we earnestly seek help from without.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to express my conviction that the credit of my humble research in the "Buddha's System of Meditation" is due to the most gracious patronage of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal, without which the fruition of this long cherished dream of mine could not have materialized and appeared at least as a pioneer ork in the field of practical meditation.

The adventure over the untrodden path and the virgin soil of this field of meditation became possible for me only through the encouragement of the patronage so graciously given to my humble enterprise in this pioneer work. So this work of mine gradually introduces the materials from the authentic sources textual, commentatorial, and non-canonical, that are relevant to the topic under research, significant, from the viewpoint of medit tion, and practically useful to our modern would-be yogins or sādhakas.

The interpretation of the old matters in the new set-up would clarify the obscurity of some old concepts in yogic literature. Traditional ideas are often scrutinized before receiving them for integration in the research. Reference to textual and other sources has been given just enough to find them out easily. The

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reference of importance is given in detail and so is the instance. Efforts have been made to mould the research work into an independent work on a practical system of yoga or samādhi.

The inconvenient gaps between the preliminary stages and the final ones of achievement are filled as far as possible, with new materials from textual and other sources. The apparently impracticable phenomena met with in the advanced stage of yogic achievement have been either cursorily mentioned, or interpreted in a way to throw an additional light on their practicable side. So have incomprehensible matters been explained by comprehensible accounts. On the whole, the work under this research maintains its independent and practical character, irrespective of the unique experiences of our sages, arhats, and Master of men and gods.

In addition to these features, each phase of this research is prepared in such a form as to make the phase a complete work by itself. If read together with the previous phases, any one of the subsequent phases will doubtlessly give a fuller exposition of the Buddha's system. The reader will therefore find this arrangement convenient for study without being hampered by the need for frequent reference to original sources of the previous phases.

The most profitable way of reading such research work as this is perhaps this: the seeker may begin any section that may attract his attention and read it through. If the section should interest him he will like to know something more about it. He may then take up the preceding or the succeeding section for further study. This might give a further impetus for reading the work backwards or forwards from the section under study. In this manner the chapter containing these sections will have smoothly finished. Then the chapter next to it should be taken up for study. Very soon he will find himself in a mood to study it seriously. If something in it should come up worth thinking, he should ponder over it before proceeding. If any thing should not fall in line with his thinking, he should criticize it and go on further to see if there is a possible answer. This is presumably a way to get interested in such a work as this.

After all, this is a pioneer work in this field. Savants might find many shortcomings in it. If our aspiration and ambition

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be not diametrically opposed to the Master's system, this work will have fulfilled the purpose for which it was undertaken. May the reader prosper and profit through a few decades' devotion to the Buddha by this author, a humble servant of the Saṅgha, uttering herein what he thought to be something substantially genuine of the Dhamma!

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II

General Principles of Supernormal Senses

Supernormal Phenomena Partake of Form Element

A PHENOMENON observed or experienced in a state of trance is supernormal, if or when this phenomenon occurs outside our normal observation and experience, or in a way not readily reducible to the normal laws of our knowledge. A state of trance itself may be said to rise above the normal state of our walking life, but we are not always aware of the unique state obtaining in any trance or samādhi. The uniqueness of perception is said to be always present in a samādhi, even if the duration of this samādhi is very short. Any perception may be taken as unique in our normal experience, if the perception is losing its external aspect and appearing within the mental field. Thus the five categories of perception would or could be felt as unique, if these get inside and appear in the mind. The grasp of an object through any one of the five sense-organs is quite different from the corresponding perception of the object and the latter again from its mental percept or concept.

The (virtually mental) percept of a visible object, for example, constitutes a principal category termed 'sanidassana-rūpa' or the visible aspect of material objects, in the Buddhistic terminology of matter and its derivatives. All other aspects of material

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objects are included in the comprehensive category of 'sanidassana-rūpa' or material objects devoid of or isolated from visibility. This sort of demarcation in matter is indeed characteristically Buddhistic and significantly of great service in distinguishing the meditative aspect of form (rūpāvacara) in "jhāna" (dhāyna in Sanskrit, but equivalent to samādhi), appanā or trance. The absence of this demarcation in other systems of yoga or meditation is apparently responsible for the omission of 'form' (rūpāvacara) in those systems. Even the *Yogasūtra* and its literature do not appear to notice the gap in its system due to the omission of formulating this fundamental experience in samādhi. Accordingly the Master must be right in claiming the discovery of the gradual form trance in four stages. The natural organization and unique experience of these stages are the fundamental basis upon which the Buddha's system of meditation is found to stand. The nucleus and thereby the clue to this system may therefore be said to consist in discerning the form element in this trance (jhāna).

Now the supernormal phenomena appear mostly to occur in a sort of form plane or region. As otherwise, the phenomena of "iddhi-vidha", or supernormal feats, said to be accomplished through resolve (adhiṭṭhāna), transformation (vikubbana), and creation of mind-made (manomaya) body would not admit of any reasonable explanation. The classical instances of these feats may be cited as the multiform resolve of the elder Cūḷa-Panthaka, the transformation of Devadatta into a young man, and the mind-made body of the Master himself appearing before his disciples in need of his immediate help respectively. The nature of the body or bodies thus produced was evidently formal and not material. For, these phantom-like bodies disappeared or rather were absorbed into the original body of their producers. These bodies were certainly seen by others, but we do not know the extent to which these were tangible and endowed with properties of matter.

The story of the encounter of Mahā-moggallāna with the mythical dragon named Nandopananda, as described by Buddhaghosa in the 12th chapter of *Visuddhi-magga*, however, shows that the transformed body of the Elder was able mightily to press or crush the body of the dragon, as one solid body could

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do another solid body. This was probably due to the power of mature resolve possessed by the Elder through long practice. On the other hand, there may arise a question as to how far the practice of manipulating the formal body can be imagined to affect the material (upādinnaka, inborn, or produced through former effective kamma or action) body of the possessor of 'iddhi' or supernormal power.

Critical Study of Form Element

The answer to this above-mentioned question is provided by Buddhaghosa in the same chapter thus:

> Therein the elder Tipiṭaka Cūḷa-nāgatthera says—What do do you say, friends? Does the material (upadinnaka, inborn) body not become small, as well as big too? When (for example) a monk (practised in yogic power) makes (his) exit through a key-hole (a hole in the door plank) etc.; then the material body (of the monk) becomes small (so small as to pass through the hole); (or) when the monk makes himself (atta-bhāva, own body) big, then it (his body) becomes big, as that (the body) of Mahā-moggallāna-tthera; (is it not so?)

It is said that the elder had escaped through the key-hole of his solitary cell on the approach of some ruffians hired by some opponents to murder him. The next example of his becoming big has been already described above.

It is apparently difficult for us to reconcile the textual and commentatorial assumption of the 'iddhi" manifestation with the common conception and everyday experience of material bodies and objects. The multiform resolve of Cūḷa-Panthaka is said to have produced a thousand phantoms of monks in the deserted monastery compound of the Mango Forest dedicated to the Saṅgha by the royal physician, Jīvaka. The messenger sent there to fetch the elder reported to the royal physician that the monastery compound was full of monks. Evidently the created forms of monks did not look all alike.

These forms were taken by the messenger for real persons in monk's garb. The messenger was sent there again. He called out, "Who is Culla (Cūḷa) Panthaka?" All the phantoms cried

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out: "I am Culla-Panthaka; I am Culla-Panthaka." The messenger was bewildered and turned back. He was sent there the third time. As instructed by his master, he caught hold of the corner of the robe (cīvara kaṇṇa) of the monk who spoke or cried out at the first moment. "Forthwith all the thousand monks (phantoms) disappeared. And the man (messenger) holding the elder walked away (came back)."

This is the version of the commentary on the Etadagga-vagga (section on "This is the foremost") of the Ekaka (one-item) Nipāta of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. We have a similar version of this story in the commentary of the *Dhammapada* (verse II. 25). The title of the story is "Cūḷapanthaka-tthera-vatthu" or the story of the elder Cūḷapanthaka. The "Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā" or the Jātaka commentary also gives us a similar story in the "Cullaka-seṭṭhi-Jātaka," or the Junior Merchant Birth-story (No. 4). The textual version, however, is found in the autobiographical gāthā (verse) of the "Thera-Gāthā" (X. 4.557-566). The commentary "Paramattha dīpani" of Dhammapāla on this gāthā gives us a similar account of Cūḷapanthaka. The difference in these versions is very slight excepting this departure from the monastery. The Gāthā (564) says: "Then the Master sent me a messenger, an informer of (dinner) time; the time (of dinner) having been informed, I approached (the Master) through the sky (the air)".

The account of Cūḷa-Panthaka's creation of the thousand monks (phantoms) in the Mango-forest Monastery compound situated in the vicinity of Rājagaha appears to be based upon the 7th stanza (No. 563) of the said Gāthā, which says: "Panthaka having created himself thousand-fold (sahassakkattum) sat down in the pleasant mango-forest till the announcement of (dinner) time." Evidently these phantoms existed in the mental field of the elder and were externalised through his mental power (adhiṭṭhāna or resolve). This phenomenon originated and emanated from his form trance; this was maintained in the form plane; and this should disappear, as it reportedly did, when the form trance was disturbed or abandoned. The form element is apparently mental and cannot partake of the properties of matter.

This phenomenon is fundamentally different from any product

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of imagination. For, we shall have to use concepts in producing an image out of imagination. And the restriction of concepts is imperative in organizing a trance. Even in kasiṇa practice the emphasis is put on the visualization, not upon the imagination, of the kasiṇa sign. Hence the field of form trance is comparatively more realistic than that of mere imagination. If the objects of dream could be manipulated at will and harnessed to our purpose, these objects and the situation arising therefrom would represent, in some respects, the phenomenon of limited 'iddhi'.

Thus the 'iddhi' phenomenon described above arises and is maintained in the 'form' field, and it dissolves, disappears, or is obsorbed, in it. For this very reason this type of 'iddhi' does not appear to be beyond the mental capacity of a resolute moderner. The perception of form is readily recognizable in a visual perception: its meditative experience is sure to convince one that the organization of 'iddhi' must start hereabou'; the unique nature of this experience itself shows that the supernormal phenomena must partake of this element for their full manifestation; and this experience is obtained even in the beginning stage of "pathama jhāna" or the first trance.

Material Base of Divine Senses

There are five senses generally accepted in Buddhism, as in other Oriental systems of religion, yoga, and philosophy. These senses are based separately on their material mediums or organs. The organs are called in Pāli "Cakkhu, Sota, Ghāna, Jihvā, Kāya," in Sanskrit as "Cakṣu, Śrota, Ghrāṇa, Jihvā, Kāya" or the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, respectively. The specific perceptions through these organs are likewise called the phenomena of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Each one of these phenomena has a special characteristic of its own. Any one of these organs cannot perform the function of the other four organs. In the Upādā-rūpa-kathā, or the description of the derivative of matter, of the 4th part of the Aṭṭhasālini and in the similar description of the 14th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, all these organs are fully described.

The argument advanced in support of the conservative views of these organs in these two books is interesting and worth serious consideration, even though it does not fall in line with

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their modern description and physiological knowledge. The separation of the perception through the two organs, the eye and the ear, from that through the remaining organs, the nose, the tongue, and the body, is made on the basis of the non-contact (asampatta) and the contact (sampatta), respectively, of the organ with the object to be perceived. The argument given in both the books upholds the conservative view that the perception of seeing and hearing is obtained without the actual contact of the eye and the ear with the visible object and the audible sound, respectively, while the perception of smelling, tasting, and touching is obtained with the actual contact (sampatta, in Sanskrit samprikta?) of the three organs with their respective objects.

This criterion of non-contact (asampatta or asamprikta in Sanskrit) and contact with the relative stimuli appears to have an important significance in the form plane. The inhabitants of this form plane, or the organizers of this form trance, are said to have the two sense-organs, the eye and the ear, only that function. Although they possess the formal body, or the body of form element, with all the five organs, their remaining three organs, the nose, the tongue, and the body (the skin), do not function. This is because a yogin, or even an amateurish meditator, becomes forgetful of these three perceptions, soon after his organization and attainment of even an initial stage of form trance. Even the physical sound has been said to hamper the equanimity of the first 'jhāna' or trance. Thus the predominant feature of the form (rūpāvacara) trance appears to consist of visual perception alone in or on the mental background. This perceptual experience is, however, devoid of any conception of the material properties of the object or the pattern of objects presented before the percipient.

The method of organizing the form trance has been fully dealt with in the first phase of this research. The brief resume, recapitulation, and review of the main thesis of the first phase can be profitably read also in the first three chapters of the second phase of this research. The sequence of many suttas or discourses treated of by the Master himself on his system of meditation undoubtedly indicates that the organization of supernormal powers and knowledges including the divine senses are taken up

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after the accomplishment of form trance. So Buddhaghosa is seemingly right, when he stipulates in his work, the *Visuddhi-magga*, that the foundation trance is the fourth jhāna of form trance. But his insistence on the mastery of form and formless trances together with all the kasiṇa practices obviously exceeds human capacity and competence. This mastery of trances and kasiṇas is imperative, he says, before the organization of super-normal powers and senses, that is, iddhi-vidha and divine ear and divine eye.

The instance of Cūḷapanthaka's speedy success in creating the thousand phantoms has been already described in the previous sections. It must show therefore that our savant has some purpose in insisting on mastering the full course of trance before attempting at gaining supernormal power. Another instance is that of Devadatta, the rebellious Shākya scion, who appears to have gained extraordinary powers soon after his ordination in Anupiyā, the town of the Mallas. This supposition is evident from the story (kathā) of the initiation (pabbajja) of six Shākya kumāras (or princes) in the beginning of the 7th Chapter (khandhaka) of the Cūḷla-vagga of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*. The relevant text is as follows:

> At that time the Buddha, the Blessed One (Bhagavā) was dwelling in Anupiyā; Anupiyā was the town (nigama) of the Mallas...Then those Shākya kumāras taking Upāli, the barber, with them approached the Blessed One...and said: 'We are, Bhante! (Sire!) Shākyas (who are) (notoriously) proud. This is, Bhante! Upāli, the barber, (who has been) our long time (digharattam, old) servant. Let the Blessed One initiate him at first...Then the Blessed One initiated Upāli at first, thereafter those Shākya kumāras. Then the venerable (āyasmā) Bhaddiya realized the three (supernormal) knowledges within the same rainy resort (antaravassena). The venerable Anuruddha obtained the divine eye (dibba cakkhum.) The venerable Ānanda realized the fruit of the first path (sotāpatti-phala). Devadatta produced the extraneous (pothujjanika) iddhi (super- normal power).

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Extraneous Iddhi of Devadatta

These six Shākya kumaras were Bhaddiya (the then Shākya king), Anurudha, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimila, Devadatta, and the seventh person was Upāli, the barber. All these elders excepting the schismatic Devadatta are included in the list of eighty mahāsāvakas or great disciples. The first of them, Buddiya, was ruling as the King of the Shākyas at that time before he was prevailed upon by his friend, Anuruddha, to join the Shākyas' group seeking initiation and ordination in the Order. So the event must have occurred after the decease of King Suddhodana, the father of our Siddhārtha. The accounts given in the Pāli text and commentary about Devadatta are seemingly so prejudiced against him as to make us hesitate to accept these accounts at their face value.

The next sutta, the "Devadatta-vatthu" informs us, in addition to his extraneous iddhi, of his manifesting a feat of transformation before the young prince, Ajātasattu, in Rājagaha. The event seems to have occurred not long after his initiation and ordination. The relevant text is given below:

> Then the Blessed One, having dwelt in Anupiyā as long as he wished, started on a begging or preaching journey towards Kosambi. Gradually progressing on this begging or preaching journey, he arrived at Kosambi. There the Blessed One dwelt in the monastery of Ghosita situated in Kosambi.

The congregation of monks, among which Devadatta was also present, had followed the Master there as usual.

> Then there arose in the mind of Devadatta (who was) in seclusion and absorption such (as the following) deliberation: 'Whom should I please so that his pleasure in me should produce great profit and support?' Then this occurred to Devadatta: 'This Ajātasattu kumāra (the son of King Bimbisāra) is young and promising (Bhadda) also in the future. Why should I not please Ajātasattu kumāra? His pleasure in me will produce great profit and support.

This sort of mental deliberation was certainly unbecoming in

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a yogin and might be rightly denounced even at present. But an ambitious Shākya scion such as Devadatta who was endowed with supernormal powers could not have tolerated the inferior position he occupied in the congregation of monks. The story of Ajātasattu given in the beginning of the commentary of the second discourse of the *Dīgha Nikāya* gives us a better version of his mental deliberation as follows:

> Then once Devadatta (seated) in seclusion thought: 'There is the congregation (of monks) of (led by) Sāriputta, there is the congregation of Mahā-moggallāna; there is the congregation (Parisā) of Mahā-kassapa; (each of them is said to be followed by five hundred monks); I too shall, take over (Nīharāmi, the charge of) a group. He thought again: 'It is not possible to gain a congregation without (a source of) profit; well, I shall create profit.'

The commentary says further that, thinking thus, he pleased the prince with the manifestation of supernormal power in the manner described in the above (7th) khandhaka. The story of Devadatta in the said khandhaka or chapter continues:

> Then Devadatta...started for Rājagaha. Gradually he reached Rājagaha. Then having withdrawn his own form and having created the form of a young boy (kumāraka-vaṇṇam) wearing a snake-girdle (ahi-mekhalikāya), Devadatta appeared on the lap of Ajātasattu Kumāra. Then Ajātasattu Kumāra became frightened...Then Devadatta said this to Ajātasattu Kumāra: 'Are you, Kumāra! afraid of me?' (He replied:) 'Yes, I am afraid. Who are you?' (The monk said in answer:) 'I am Devadatta.' (He said:) 'If you are, Bhante (Sire)! Ayya (elder) Devadatta, hurry up (iṅgha) and appear in your own form.' Then having withdrawn the form of the young boy, Devadatta (in the garb of a monk) holding the bowl and wearing the robe stood before Ajātasattu Kumāra.

This account of iddhi transformation of Devadatta appears to be significantly authentic. For, he had fallen in to disfavour of the Buddha and thereby of the Saṅgha from the beginning at

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least of his monastic life. There is a considerable number of suttas, references, and Jātaka stories regarding his misbeahaviour and enmity towards the Bodhisattva and the Buddha. King Milinda, in the 4th part of the *Milinda-pāñha* (Milinda's questions, has brought twenty-three instances from the Jātaka stories before Nāgasena to show that Devadatta was, in most instances, superior to the Bodhisattva and in a few instances only equal to the latter. Nāgasena acknowledged his contention in these words:" Whatever you, Mahārāja! have brought up as many-sided reason is all like that (true) and not otherwise." The monk explained further:

> Nay, Mahārāja! Devadatta was not antagonistic to all the people. He was antagonistic to the Bodhisattva alone... Devadatta used to give, Mahārāja! protection to the country when he stood (in his former lives) in a position of power. He used to construct bridges, resting houses, alms halls and to distribute alms...to the needy.

This sort of acknowledgement from an authoritative source is certainly astounding. As a matter of fact most of the members of the order were not against Devadatta and the stiffened attitude displayed by the Master towards him, at least in the beginning of his so-called ascendancy, puzzled them. The elder Mahāmoggallāna was not of course favourably disposed towards him, as may be inferred from the latter portion of this very sutta. He (the elder) informed the Master that Devadatta, puffed up with the profit and support he received, was desiring to lead the congregation of monks himself. The foremost principal disciple, Sāriputta, on the other hand, was favourably disposed towards Devadatta. According to the 4th sutta of this very khandhaka, when the Master asked Sāriputta to undertake the task of disclosing, or virtually excommunicating, Devadatta in (the streets of) Rajagaha, the elder monk indirectly and politely refused to execute the edict of excommunication (pakāsaniya kamma) as follows.

> Then the Blessed One addressed to the venerable Sariputta: Well, you Sāriputta! disclose (pakāsehi, excommunicate)

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Devadatta in (the streets of) Rājagaha. The of fence of Devadatta, as described in the beginning of this sutta was to deliver the congregation of monks over to him, so that he could lead it, 'because the Blessed One was now withered, old, and advanced in age'. He was refused the request thrice with a strong reprimand. As soon as he left the meeting, the Master called upon the monks to disclose (excommunicate) him in Rājagaha. The Master selected Sāriputta to communicate the edict in the city. Thereupon the elder replied: "Formerly I have, Bhante spoken the praise of Devadatta in Rajagaha (thus)—'Possessed with great iddhi is the son of Godhi (Devadatta); endowed with great power is the son of Godhi. How should I, Bhante! disclose Davadatta in Rājagaha?

Thereupon the Master asked him: "Well, Sāriputta! did you speak the actual praise of Devadatta in Rājagaha as that—possessed with . . . , and endowed with great power is the son of Godhi?" It is so, Bhante!' was the answer. Then the Master said to him: "In the same way, Sāriputta! you disclose Devadatta by the actual (fact) in Rājagaha." "So (will it be done), Bhante"! was his reply. The excommunication was however differently received in Rājagaha, where Devadatta was in the ascendant position due to the support of him by the Crown Prince. The fore thought of the Master in publicizing the excommunication was, however, fully justified later, when Devadatta was implicated in instigating the prince to seize the crown by disposing of his royal father. Nevertheless we are at a loss to understand the disagreement existing between the Master and his close relative and disciple, Devadatta, most probably from household life in the Shākyan country.

The close study of this episode will clearly show that the organization of 'iddhi' in the Buddha's system cannot be as hard and complicated as Buddhaghosa presents before us in the 12th and 13th Chapters of the *Visuddhi-magga*. We have already shown, in the section entitled "Devadatta's Acquirement of Iddhi", Chapter XX, in the second phase of this research, as to how Devadatta developed the iddhi from the first jhāna or dhyāna. The foundation trance is obviously the first form trance therein.

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The source of the above section, however, is not so authentic as the Pāli text quoted cited in this section. But our Pāli text herein does not give us any information regarding the method Devadatta adopted for producing iddhi so thoroughly and so quickly. But we can fairly suppose that the period of time for this accomplishment of iddhi was not more than three or four months of the rainy season. This is of prime importance. Moreover neither the text nor the commentary complicates the issue with the usual merit complex in this case.

The mention of extraneous (pothujanika) iddhi even in the original text need not frighten us. The Ariya (noble) iddhi, or the iddhi possessed by an Arhat, is and should certainly be much more powerful and lasting than the pothujanika iddhi, or the iddhi possessed by an ordinary or common person. The reason for this difference however will be given later. What we have guarded against is the exhibition, improper use, and enjoyment of the extraordinary power psychic or physical that we have gained through meditation. Our iddhi would remain in the category of a pothujanika one, unless and until we can conscientiously declare before someone that we have realized the state of arhatship and extinguished over the thirst for life. The instance of the acquirement of iddhi by Cūḷapanthaka, side by side with that by Devadatta, should not fail to encourage as well as to warn us in the yogic enterprise; but never would it let us entertain any doubt about its actuality and possibility.

Significance of Mind and Matter

We have already seen how the supernormal power through resolve (and transformation) is manifested in a number of supernormal feats which are collectively known as 'iddhi-viddha' or variety of iddhi. Thus the development of psychic, or physico-psychic powers through resolve, transformation, and mind-made body would constitute iddhi-vidha. These three mediums or means of effecting the phenomena of iddhi are not ostensibly different from each other; for fundamentally these mediums are seemingly derived from the manipulation of form element presupposed in the foundation trance; and the foundation trance primarily consists of form element. We do not know what this form element is made of. The metaphysic analysis of this

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element has never been encouraged nor earnestly conducted in the text and commentary, excepting that this element is also subject to decay and destruction, as other elements of matter and mind are.

The classification of mind and matter is found in the Dhamma-saṅgaṇi, the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, after its own fashion and not in the manner we are accustomed to at present. Even the detailed explanation given in its commentary, the Aṭṭhasālini does not succeed in making our point clear. The point we would have much liked to clarify is whether or not the mind, physically speaking, has a separate existence of its own and absolutely independent of matter. The heart (hadaya) plays an important role in this context. The base of mind element (mano-dhātu) and mind-consciousness-element (mano-viññāṇa-dhātu) is regarded as the heart (hadaya) in the commentary of the Paṭṭhāna, the last or seventh work of the *Abhidhamma*. The text however records the "rūpa" (matter) only, which is interpreted as the heart by the commentator. The word, rūpa, in this context appears to have been correctly interpreted, for it could not have been done otherwise. It is to be noted that the mental base is not held to be the brain, as done by us at present.

The exposition (vaṇṇana) of the detailed treatment (niddesa) of twenty-four conditions (paccayas) is given in the second section of the first initial chapter of the commentary on the Paṭṭhāna. This is one of the few brilliant expositions from which we might hope to draw our own conclusion about the existence of mind and matter, whether their existence is absolute or relative, real or illusive. But we do not find any clear statement regarding their nature of existence. In the known world of ours, where there are five constituents (pañca-vokāra, or pañca-khandha), viz matter and four mental or immaterial heaps (khandhas), the mind and the matter are said to be practically interdependent. The first moment of our foetal life is said to have begun from the simultaneous emergence of our heart and resultant mind-consciousness, or matter and mind. But we are practically unaware of this emergence.

From that initial moment to the progress of our life-continuum (bhavaṅga), we are in a sort of dreamless sleep, only roused to the waking state for a short period of mental moments, when

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the congnitive process (citta-vīthi) sets in. Even during the period of our strenuous work mental or physical, we are, according to Buddhistic psychology, continually lapsing into a state of forgetfulness or sleepiness (bhavaṅga) about every two seconds (sixteen mental moments). This sort of lapse can be checked only through the practice of memory (sati) and meditation (jhāna). Memory can be maintained even when we are engaged in physical work. If the work is done and followed with memory, this memory or awareness is called 'sati'. And when the work is preceded by the memory of the impulse (javana) of doing that work, this memory is practically the same as "sampajañña". It is however in a meditative state of jhāna that a continuous flow of fully conscious moments is obtained. This flow is known as "appanā".

The method of cultivating "sati" or memory has been dealt with in the seventh chapter entitled "Satipaṭṭhāna or Cultivation of Memory" in the second phase of this research. The systematic study of "jhāna" or meditative trance may be revised from the relevant chapters of the first phase of this research. The practice of memory generally begins with the remembering of respiration from moment to moment and is called "ānāpāna sati". The fourth chapter entitled "Ānāpāna Sati or Memory of Respiration" of the second phase of this research deals with this subject. But the most effective method of keeping our memory always awake and alert is the constant remembrance of bodily feeling. This practice has been fully treated of in the ninth chapter entitled "Vedanā-anupassanā or Observation of Feeling of the second phase of this research".

The method of meditation in the Buddha's system from the very beginning aims at generating and maintaining a continuous flow of conscious mental moments. Memory of respiration (Ānāpāna) is the easiest method, of generating this flow of consciousness. For we are generally aware of our breathings and can utilize them in order to generate this conscious flow. Buddhaghosa treats of this subject in the detailed description (vitthāra-kathā-mukham) of the memory of respiration (ānāpāna sati) in the eighth chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. This description is also found in a number of textual suttas and their commentary. The fully analytical description of this practice is however given

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in the third kathā of the first vagga in the Paṭisambhidāmagga the 12th book of the *Khuddaka-nikāya*.

Device of Memory Practice on Respiration

The gist of all these versions of the "Memory of Respiration" is to generate and maintain an uninterrupted flow of consciousness by means of remembering the movement of respiration, from moment to moment. This remembrance of respiration can be conducted through any one of the five concomitants of the mind, viz., touch or contact (phassa), feeling (vedanā)., perception or consciousness (saññā), mental act or will (cetanā), and thought or mind (citta). Generally it is the effort (cetanā) to breathe in or inhale the air that (the effort) we remember almost always indirectly, but have to do directly in our practice. Less clearly than this effort of in breathing, we also remember the relaxation of this effort of inhalation, that expels the inside air automatically, but we have to be fully aware of this relaxation or exhalation or out-breathing as well. If we apply a slight effort to inhale as well as to exhale, the effort to do so is very easy to be remembered at the same instant by the same effort. For the mind is present when any one of its concomitants is active or comes into play.

Closely allied to this effort is the feeling (vedanā) of in and out breathings. In this device we let the breath come in and go out freely without our conscious effort. We are just aware of the feeling of respiration. This device rapidly quietens the mental fluctuation in or diversion towards outer objects and inner vitakkas or deliberations. For when the mind is wholly engaged in following the feeling of respiration from moment to moment, the mind finds no time either for diversion or for deliberation. This flow of consciousness through feeling (vedanā) by itself would have meant little to the meditator, if this flow had not been capable of developing into a state of trance. It appears that consciouness itself assumes the form of a trance, when it (consciousness) settles down, intensifies, and brightens up. The Master very often mentions this brightness (āloka) of consciousness and knowledge in declaring his Enlightenment.

Another device of conducting memory on respiration is touch

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or contact (phassa). The commentary on the third excommunication (pārājika) in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* under the section "Ānāpāna-sati-samādhi-kathā" gives us a fuller detail that is also found in the 8th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga* than the detail given in the commentary on the relative portion of other suttas. The commentary states eight kinds of device (vidhi) for conducting this exercise (kammaṭṭhāna). They are: "Counting (gaṇanā); following up (anubandhanā); touching (or feeling the contact of phusanā); steadying (ṭhapanā); observing (sallakana); devolving (from rebirth cycle, vivattanā); Purification (parisuddi); and reviewing (paṭipassanā). The last four items are concerned with the way and fruit of liberation. So we shall explain the first four items only.

The method of counting one's own in-breaths and out-breaths is elaborately given in the above commentary and the *Visuddhimagga*. This counting method seems to have been devised for the benefit of men who are not fully aware of regular breathing. The full treatment of this method, however, shows that this device (kammaṭṭhāna) of respiration (Ānāpāna) might have been widely taught and practised at the time of the compilation of the commentary and at least during Buddhaghosa's time. In short, the method of counting should not fix the number at less than five nor carry it above ten, nor show a break in the series. When counting, he should count slowly at first. Taking the in-breathing or the out-breathing whichever might appear patent, he should continue to repeat the same number till the particular breath ends. With next breath, he should begin and continue to repeat the next higher number till this breath also comes to an end. Similarly the consecutive number is to be kept on pronouncing with the corresponding breath inner or outer."

To state clearly, the beginner taking, say at first, the in-breathing counts it as 'one, one, one...' till the in-breathing effort ends and out-breathing starts. With the starting of out-breathing, he counts it as 'two, two...' till this out-breath comes to an end. When he takes the next in-breath, he counts it as 'three, three, three...' till it ends. On the out-breath following it, he counts this out-breath as 'four, four, four...' Then taking the in-breath he counts it as 'five, five, five, five . .' The purpose of repeating the same number at each breathing is to lengthen the memory

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of respiration through counting the number. The series may end at this number 'five' or continue successively to six, seven, eight, nine or ten. At the end of this terminating number, he is to begin the counting or breaths from 'one' once more. The process is to be repeated again and again. This is the slowly counting process.

Another or next process is the quickly counting of each breath. This quick process is to begin after some practice of the slow process has been satisfactorily done. By the practice of counting breaths in a slow process, the movement of respiration in and out becomes plain to the practiser. Hence he can count the breath in its movement through the opening of the nose. The breath is a current of air, like the current of water; this current, therefore, consists of many bubbles of air coming in with each in-breath and going out with each out-breath. So he can count the imaginary bubbles of air as 'one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine ten'. In the former or slow process the counting of breath was only the repetition of 'one, one, one...one' or 'two, two, two...two' or 'three, three, three, three' or 'five, five, five...five', or ten, ten, 'ten...ten'. But in the latter or quick process, the counting of each breath is a series of consecutive number such as 'one, two, three...five, ten.'

The reason given by the commentator for keeping the number between five and ten and for avoiding any break in counting is this: "For the keeping (of the number) at less than five makes the mind jump off the narrow limit (or range)...; the carrying (of the number) above ten makes the arising of the mind on the support of counting (numbers such as eleven, twelve, thirteen... nineteen...diverting the mind from the remembrance of respiration); the showing of intervening break (in counting) makes the mind waver: "Whether or not my kammaṭṭhāna (practice) has reached the top." The commentator therefore advises the practiser to count the breath avoiding these defects. The counting device of respiration appears to be an invention in the commentary, inasmuch as we find this counting neither in the textual suttas, nor in the Ānāpāna-ssati-kathā (I. 3) of the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*. Nevertheless this counting device is well graduated and can make anyone fully aware of respiration through the nostrils from moment to moment.

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Subtle Device of Attention on Respiration

In the preceding section we have seen how the counting device has given us a graduated method of detecting the respiration from moment to moment. We might wonder at the elaborate manner of treatment given to such a commonplace fact as respiration in the text and the commentary and the *Visuddhi-magga*. Our wonder would however vanish and give place to serious concern when we are called upon to develop the simple memory on respiration on graver lines and to launch it on a life-long excursion. The respiration serves only for a support of memory, a unique concomitant of the mind, that deludes our attempt at comprehending it. The Master declares "sati" or memory to be all-purposive (sabbatthikā) and we can have no reason for doubting its veracity.

It appears that the Buddhistic system of remembering or recollecting the respiration (ānāpāna) was fundamentally different from the practice of 'prāṇāyāma' so widely mentioned in almost all the oriental systems of yoga and meditation. For in the former system the restraint of breath (kumbhaka, virtually prāṇāyāma) is met with nowhere. Were it even indirectly implied the counting of breath would not have given so thoroughly without any provision for the stoppage of breath. The counting device was certainly a later invention as we have already said in the preceding section. It is strange that Buddhaghosa ignores this branch of practical knowledge in dealing with 'ānāpāna'.

It is recorded that the Bodhisattva practised a severe sort of breath-restraining meditation termed "appāṇaka jhāna" (āsphānaka dhyāna in Buddhist Sanskrit) sometimes during the six years' austerities. Meditation could not progress smoothly and naturally under a forced restraint of breath. And the Bodhisattva consequently discarded it. So a natural type of breathing was adopted in 'āpāna' and the forced type discernible is 'prāṇāyāma' was done away with for good in Buddhism. It was probably unfortunate for us. For we would not have been so deprived of possibly valuable information about practice and experience of this facet of practical yoga from this most important source, if the 'ānāpāna' were not totally divested of the traditional 'prāṇāyāma'.

Hence the spirit of 'ānāpāna' suggests that we are not to apply

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any force to our breathing in or breathing out, but we should let our respiration move in and out in a smooth and natural manner. The method of counting breath at first slowly then quickly described in the preceding section might have shown that the purpose was to make the novice fully aware of his regular respiration palpable at the opening, or at the tip of the nose, or on the upper lip (mukhanimitta) just in front of the nostrils. When the 'sati' or memory is thus established on the support of respiration, the commentator says that the counting of breath should be discontinued.

Now at this stage the following (anubandhanā) of respiration by means of memory is to begin. The commentary as well as the *Visuddhi-magga*, says: Anubandhanā is to follow the in-breathing and the out-breathing unremittingly through memory, after the counting (of breath) has been discontinued... This is to be attended to by means of touch (phusanā) and steadiness (ṭhapanā)". The memory of respiration can be conducted through feeling as well as touch or contact. But Buddhaghosa in his work insists on his favourite method, that is 'touch'. The sense of touch is felt when the incoming or outgoing breath or air comes in contact with the membrane of the inner wall of the nostrils. This sense of touch is naturally subtle in comparison with the feeling experienced at each respiration. But when the feeling is established or steadied, the sense of touch or contact is automatically felt or experienced as well. The five concomitants of the mind, mentioned in the preceding section, are indeed mutually connected.

The elaborate detail of this 'kammaṭṭhāna' of 'ānāpāna', with several instances of individual experience given in the said commentary (on the third pārājika) and *Visuddhi-magga* (the 8th chapter), shows that Buddhaghosa, the commentator and the writer respectively, was conversant with the practice of ānāpāna as current in his time. The counting of breath is certainly a later invention in the commentary, which is not found in other oriental systems. The commentary as well as the *Visuddhi-magga* has frequently quoted passages from the 'Ānāpāna-ssati-Kathā (1.3) of the *Paṭisambhidā-magga* for the support of particulars and interpretations given in the commentary and the *Visuddhi-magga*. But in doing so these works seem, at least in one

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particular instance, to have interpreted the passage of the *Paṭisambhidhā-magga* in a manner best suited to their own notion and practice.

This particular instance is

> "the initial, the middle, and the end parts of the in-breath ... of the out-breath..., when followed by memory, cause both the body and the mind to be disturbed, shaken, and upset due to the mind being distracted inward (in the case of in-breath)... out-ward (in the case of out-breath).

The context undeniably shows that the cause of bodily and mental disturbance, shakiness, and upsetting is mainly due to mental distraction inward or outward, as the case may be, and not on account of the memory following the initial, middle, and end parts of respiration. Many causes of mental distraction are stated in the same section. But Buddhaghosa utilizesd this passage to support his thesis: "That (the following of respiration unremittingly through memory) is surely not by means of following the initial, middle, and end parts (of respiration).

The initial, middle, and end parts of in-breathing, according to the commentary and the *Visuddhi-magga*, are the tip of nose, the heart, and the navel, respectively. In out-breathing the same parts are reversed as the navel, the heart, and the nose-tip, respectively. These two works provide us with three similes to illustrate the thesis: "Thus the monk is seated having maintained the memory on the nose-tip or the upper lip," without giving attention to the initial, middle and end parts of respiration. The first of the similes is that of a crippled man, seated beneath a swing-post and recking the swing, sees (from and on the same spot) both the ends and the middle of the swing-plank coming up and going away successively; but the man does not care to look at the two ends, nor at the middle of the swing-plank. Similarly, the (practising) monk follows through memory the incoming and outgoing breaths . . . successively; but the monk does not care to look at (to follow) their initial, middle, and end parts.

The second simile is that of the gate-keeper of a city. The gate-keeper examines the persons arriving at the gate only and

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does not concern himself with questions (to be put) to persons inside and outside (the city as follows):

'Who are you? Where are you coming from? Where are you going to? What have you in your hand? In like manner, the monk has no concern with the air entering and leaving; but his concern is only the air arriving at the gate (the opening of the nose). The third simile is that of the saw cutting a log and given in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*. The importance of this last instance is observable from the detail and the notice given in the two works. "There lies a tree thrown on a plane ground," the simile runs, where a man comes in and cuts it by means of a saw.

> "The man's memory is maintained by means of the saw-teeth in contact with the tree. He neither pays any attention to the saw-teeth coming up (to him) or going away (from him), nor the saw-teeth become unknown in their coming up or going away."

Similarly,

> "the monk sits down maintaining the memory at the nose-tip or the upper lip. He does not pay any attention to in-breathing and out-breathing (like the saw-teeth), when they come up and go away; nor the in-breathing and out-breathing become unknown, while they come up and go away."

These three similes, although given to support the above thesis, seem to prove the contrary. The memory of respiration, although concentrated at the nose-tip or at upper lip, does not become in practice unaware of the initial, middle, and end parts of respiration at the nose-tip, heart, and navel in in-breathing, and at the navel, heart, and nose-tip in out-breathing, respectively. The touch, felt on the membrane of the nostrils when the air of respiration comes in contact with the membrane, is only a subtle medium for maintaining memory. The memory, however, has a tendency to expand and become wider and wider, finer and finer, or subtler and subtler. The touch, so generated and maintained through memory of respiration, will be at first

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of course felt on the membrane inside the nostrils. The mention of nose-tip or upper lip appears to be merely symbolic. The practical place of attention would be wherever the contact with the air of respiration is felt as the sensation of touch. This sensation is akin to feeling and therefore would gradually spread throughout the bodily feeling (kāyika-vedanā).

The feeling (vedanā) is, however, less subtle than the touch-sensation; hence it (the feeling) is easier to be detected and maintained than the sensation of touch. The practice through the feeling is however conducive to form trance, although Buddhaghosa says that the form trance is (may also be) produced through the practice of the touch-sensation of ānāpāna.

Comparative Study of Three 'Maggas'

Before the investigation into the organization of supernormal or divine sense is conducted and dealt with, we shall have to establish the subtle device of memory cultivation through the sensation of touch also on ānāpāna or respiration. For the sense of touch (phassa) is obviously the first of the five senses and the subtle device of respiration through the sensation of touch, besides feeling, promises to give us a lead towards the objective we have in view. The elder Upatissa has left us no commentary on the text. We have, however, fortunately before us his work, the *Vimutti-magga*, not very different from the *Visuddhi-magga*. In the absence of the original work we cannot rightly evaluate the work *Vimutti-magga* as a whole. But it appears that this work borrows from the text of the *Paṭisambhidā-magga* much more than the *Visuddhi-magga* does. The confusion and difficulty naturally arise, when we find in several places a marked difference from the extant text, commentary, and Visuddhimagga and the *Vimutti-maga*.

Nevertheless the little-known author gives us in his work the views of certain traditions, which appear to be very interesting and valuable. His own views constitute an unmistakable common tradition and thus give us an insight into the unique working of the Buddhistic mind specifically along the development of supernormal elements. Comparison and contrast of

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this work (*Vimutti-magga*) with the two works, the *Visuddhi-magga* and the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*, would be very profitable to determine the correct and appropriate character and version of this subtle practice of ānāpāna. We shall, however, keep our discussion within the limit of "Mindfulness of respiration" given in Section IV under Chapter VIII of 'The Path of Freedom' (*Vimutti-magga*) and "Ānāpāna-sati-kathā" of the two works mentioned above.

It is to be noticed that both the savants, Upatissa and Buddhaghosa, have borrowed the relevant matter from the *Paṭi-Sambhidā-magga*. Upatissa appears to have borrowed much more than Buddhaghosa has done from the textual work. The little-known savant has not mentioned the said work by name, while our well known savant, Buddhaghosa, has mentioned it. Moreover, our savant appears to have done so only in support of his thesis; for he appears to have ample practical materials from the old commentatorial literature besides his own experience in the kammaṭṭhāna of ānāpāna. Thus he has seemingly diverted in his treatment of the subject from the simple textual method as found in the *Sati-paṭṭhāna-sutta* of the first four Nikāyas to his thesis. To all appearances, the method taught in the suttas is through the feeling, whereas Buddhaghosa's method is based upon the sensation of touch in contact with the air inhaled and exhaled through the nostrils. This method may presumably lead the yogin to gain Divine Touch (divya sparśa, *Yogasūtra* III. 36 com.).

Upatissa, on the other hand, appears to follow the *Paṭisam-bhidā-magga* in his exposition of the mindfulness of respiration (ānāpāna-sati in Pāli literature) assimilating the traditional pattern of fixing mindfulness at the nose-tip or on the lip. It is, however, strange that he should ascribe the method (vidhi in Pāli) of attending to respiration, such as "counting, connection (that is following), contacting (or touching), and fixing (ṭhapanā in Pāli), to certain predecessors. It is strange because the method is given in the Pāli commentary on the third Pārājika of the *Vinaya* as mentioned in the previous section. It is inexplicable, except that Upatissa belonged to a sect of elders who followed the *Vinaya* commentary other than what we have.

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In this exceptional case only he would ascribe the above method to "certain (ekacce, some) predecessors."

The above supposition that the author of the *Vimutti-magga* belonged to a separate sect is borne out also by the meagre treatment he has given to this method as compared to the much detailed treatment in this commentary. He writes, "And again, certain predecessors taught four ways of practising mindfulness of respiration. They are counting, connection, contacting, and fixing" (Gaṇanā, Anubaṇdhanā, Phusanā, and Ṭhapanā respectively, in the said Pāli commentary).

> What is counting? A new yogin counts the breaths from one to ten, beginning with the outgoing breath and ending with the incoming breath. He does not count beyond ten. Again, it is taught that he counts from one to five but does not count beyond five. He does not miss . . . [—The Path of Freedom (*Vimutti-magga*), p. 159]

In the brief description of 'counting' quoted above, we really miss the much fuller detail of the said commentary. As a matter of fact, this brief statement cannot serve as a practical guide to the counting method. The description of the remaining three items is still more laconic and less informatory. He says: "Connection: Having counted, he follows respiration with mindfulness, continuously. This is called connection." (ibid, p. 159). Similarly, the term 'contacting' is explained as "attending to the contact of respiration at the nose-tip or on the lip". And in 'fixing' . . . "he should establish the image" in Pāli, sign) (—ibid, page 160). This brief treatment shows that the author of this work was not very enthusiastic about this subtle practice in preference to the regular practice advocated in suttas and exposed in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*. The regular practice is principally the same as we find in the sati-paṭṭhāna sutta of the four Nikāyas as an initial and preliminary course.

Critical Study of Subtle or Touch Device

Nevertheless, the subtle practice of respiration through contact or touch appears to be well recognized even in the *Vimutti-magga*. The function of respiration is said, in this work,

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to be "attending to contact". Under the sub-heading "Procedure" (page 157), it says: "What is the procedure (of the mindfulness of respiration)? The new yogin having gone to a forest . . . sits down . . . with mindfulness established in front. He is mindful in respiration . . . a long breath . . . a short breath . . . thus he trains himself." This long passage is a near version of the regular passage on 'ānāpāna' in its enlarged form. Commenting on the above textual passage, the author writes: "Here, he (the new yogin) trains himself in 'breathing in' means: mindfulness is fixed at the nose-tip or on the lip" . . . The author of the *Visuddhi-magga*, as well as the commentator of the said *Vinaya* commentary quotes the similar textual passage as given in the *Vimutti-magga*. The detail or the comment is, however, apparently different between the *Vimutti-magga* on the one hand, and the *Visuddhi-magga* and the said *Vinaya* commentary, on the other.

It is seemingly apparent that the commentatorial source of the two authors is not identical. The mention of fixing mindfulness "at the nose-tip or on the lip" is repeated several times in the *Vimutti-magga*. The reason for doing so is given further: "These (nose-tip and lip) are the places connected with breathing in and breathing out." The touch of air at these places is made clear further on: "He (the yogin) considers the context of the incoming and the outgoing breath, through mindfulness that is fixed at the nose-tip or on the lip . . ." The simile of a saw cutting a log of wood with its teeth is given further without referring to the source thus:

> "It is as if a man were sawing wood. That man does not attend to (the perception of) the going back and forth of the saw (teeth). In the same way, the yogin does not attend to the perception of the incoming and the outgoing breath in mindfulness of respiration. He is aware of the contact (of the air) at the nose-tip or on the lip . . . p. 158).

The above procedure, however, is not different from the sutta style or remembering the respiration. The *Visuddhi-magga*, on the other hand, is much more methodical in presenting the thesis before us. After describing the main body of the

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sutta, found in the Vesāli sutta (No. 9) of the Ānāpāna Samyutta of the *Samyutta Nikāya* and also in the third Pārājika of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, Buddhaghosa deals with the full explanation of the sutta as he does in the said Vinaya commentary, the *Samanta-pāsādikā*. Then he introduces what amounts to his thesis:

> Without being confused even about a single word learnt from the teacher, this device (kammaṭṭhāna) of memory on respiration should be brought in the mind. Therein this is the method (vidhi) of bringing (the device) in the mind. The method is the counting, following, touching . . . reviewing (of respiration)

As already discussed in the previous section . . . "How long should it (respiration) be counted? So long as the memory stays (is able to stay) on the support of in-breathing and out-breathing without counting (breath)."

This counting method is certainly ingenious and deserves to be called an invention. It is not found in any Oriental system of yoga concerned with respiration through the nostrils. Therein are various sorts of foretelling and are said to be correctly told by means of signs of breathing through either of the nostrils. While the total number of breaths, evidently, counted in an average, is given as 21600 for the whole day and night (ahorātra), that is, 24 hours. This count comes down to a rate of one breath, that is a complete breath, per four seconds. Several esoteric uses are made of this count, particularly in assigning certain sub-totals to certain deities imagined to be residing in certain centres within the central canal and within the back-bone. Respiration is regarded in this system as an 'Ajapā Gāyatri' or automatically recited mantra or charm. In another system of yoga, this automatic nature of respiration is made use of in realizing the objective the system aims at. But the ingenious method of detecting the continuous flow of respiration by 'counting' is certainly missing in other oriental systems of meditation by means of respiration.

To resume the topic, Buddhaghosa takes up the method of following the respiration through continuous memory.

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This is evidently the general method of the text on 'Ānāpāna'. The spirit of the textual method would be found virtually to utilize the feeling (vedanā) for this purpose. But he insists on his thesis: "That (following) is certainly not by means of following the initial, middle and terminal parts (of respiration)." Further on he says:

> "The initial part of the outgoing air (exhalation) is the navel; the middle part of it is the heart; the terminal part of it is the nose. The initial part of the incoming air (inhalation) is the nose-tip, the middle part of it is the heart; the terminal part of it is the navel. The distracted mind of one who follows this (triple part) gets disturbed and shaken.

To support this point he quotes the passage from the *Paṭisambhidā-magga* already discussed in the previous section.

The second section of the 'Ānāpāna-kathā' of the *Paṭisambhidā-magga* records eighteen defilements (upakkilessas) that cause the distracted mind (vikkhepa-gatam cittam) which is said to be the impediment to samādhi. It appears that these defilements originate inside (ajjhatta) or outside (bahiddha) not due to memory following the respiration from its beginning to end, but due to fundamental causes, such as desire, thirst, swooning, etc. The cultivation of memory (sati-paṭṭhāna) requires that the memory should improve in extension, quality, and purity. But in order to preclude the following of respiration anywhere inside or outside the door of entry or exit for respiration, that is, the nose-tip, our savant emphasizes the point further:

> Therefore one who brings the mind into play (in this kammaṭṭhāna) by means of the 'following' should not meditate through the initial, middle, and terminal parts (such as the navel, the heart, and the nose), but through the touch and steadiness.

He says further:

> There is no separate manner of meditation (manasikāra)

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through the touch and steadiness as through the counting and following (breath). But the counting (of breath itself) at the places of touch makes the manner of meditation through the counting and touching. Therein the counting (of breaths) having been discontinued, these (breath) being followed through memory, and the mind being steadied through absorption (appanā-vasena), one is said to meditate through the following and the touching and the steadying.

Then he brings in the three similes to illustrate his point, as described in the previous section. He, however, rightly says further on: "As other meditative devices (kammaṭṭhānas) become clearer (vibhūta) at higher stages (of meditation), this (kammaṭṭhāna) does not become so. On the contrary, this (kammaṭṭhāna) being developed at higher stages becomes subtler (sukhumattam) and even eludes detection."

Anapana to Samadhi

The phenomenon of respiration getting subtler or fainter at each rise of meditation is quite common place. But this general principle has received close attention in all the three works under discussion. For this purpose Buddhaghosa advocates the touching method of the gate (nostrils, or the opening of the nose, or the nose-tip) through which the air of breath makes its entry and exit throughout the life. But the detection of the contact of air in respiration, at the inside of the nose-tip or on the upper lip just below the nostrils, is not always easy. With the contrivance of counting breath rather arbitrarily, anyone may easily detect the current of air passing in and out at the nostrils. Then stopping the count, the memory will replace the count with the 'following'. Side by side the attention to or discernment of the sensation of airy touch at the nose-tip might give one a feeling of joy and pleasure.

These two factors, joy and pleasure, are themselves factors or constituents of samādhi. And the yogin, or anyone practising yoga, cannot be far from a trance, if he feels the pleasant sensation in meditation. The device of rising above or transecending the first or preliminary stage of samādhi is to get absorbed in a support free from 'vitakka' and 'vicāra', or mental

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speech and concept. This support is provided by the mental field abounding in joy and pleasure. Mental speech or deliberation hampers the mind with its irregular vibration in attaining a state of samādhi as the noise does in gross form. So the support of joy and pleasure helps us to organize samādhi. And the memory of respiration, either through the feeling or through the contact or the touch of respiration, quickly checking the mental speech and concept, brings about a state of samādhi.

The stoppage of 'vitakka' and 'vicāra' is said to be followed by a state of joy and pleasure and the state again by mental equilibrium in the form trance. But this unique trance is difficult to be detected and distinguished from the material plane, without organizing the first form trance that has been fully described in "The Four Fundamental Trances" and "Meditation on Earth Kasiṇa" chapters of the first phase of this research. The sutta style of describing the method of ānāpāna is seemingly conducive to samādhi. But Buddhaghosa would have us follow the description given in the Paṭhavi Kasiṇa, the fourth chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, for obtaining samādhi, that is, form trance. His subtle method of respiration through touch is certainly profitable for developing the sense of touch, but he utilizes it for detecting subtler and subtler respirations of bodily formations till they cease in the fourth stage of form trance or samādhi.

The sutta style seems to follow the general pattern of the *Sati-paṭṭhāna* in which the observation on the body, on the feeling, on the mind, and on the principal items of the Dhamma is gradually taught through ordinarily practical means. The commentary on the 'Vedanā-anupassanā' of this *Sati-paṭṭhāna* Sutta (I.10) of the *Majjhima Nikāya* extensively deals with the means of conducting the kammaṭṭāna of two categories, matter and mind. The means are either the defining and analyzing the four material elements in the case of physical means, or mostly the feeling (vedanā) in the case of non-material (arūpa) kammaṭṭhānas. The role of feeling as a means for meditation is very important and significant. Besides the utility of feeling in form trance, the feeling is apparently the medium through which the supernormal power of 'Resolve, Transformation, and Mind-made Body' is given effect to. Hence we propose to bring the

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commentatorial survey over this topic in a later section before the reader.

The would-be yogins might find the missing link between the usual trance and the organization to supernormal powers in the meditative use of feeling as disclosed in the said commentary to be given in the next section. They might find a sort of clue to the development of so-called 'divine senses', of which we have in the Buddha's system only the two items, 'Divine Ear' and 'Divine Eye', but not the remaining senses. The *Yogasūtra*, however, summarily deals with all the five senses. No explanation is to be found in the suttas for the omissions of, or rather ignoring the inclusion of these three senses in the category of supernormal knowledge based on 'Divine senses'. It is to be noticed in this context that the inhabitants of form plane the Brahmaloka of various categories, are imagined to possess, the two senses only, those of hearing and seeing, while the remaining three senses are denied to them; although they are said to possess the bodily forms (rūpa-kāyas), the feature of their face is, however, complete with the three ineffective sense-organs besides the two effective ones.

We have ample instances of supernormal or heavenly touch, taste, and smell experienced by men living in our own material plane. The inhabitants of the second heaven are said to enjoy these heavenly blessings as we do our own earthly ones. It is therefore unlikely that the Master was unaware of the contrivance for developing these three senses. It is very probable that the Master saw the danger of possessing and developing by his disciples these senses and consequently eschewed them away from his system altogether. Moreover, the middle path (majjhima patipadā) advocated by the Buddha is the avoidance of both the extremes of experience, viz, indulgence in sensual enjoyment through the five senses on the one extreme, and undertaking self-imposed penance to escape sensual enjoyment on the other extreme. These three senses ordinarily give us so much sensual pleasure that their supernormal development would or might jeopardize or even preclude our ever attaining liberation or freedom therefrom.

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Feeling : Its Application and Implication

The commentary on the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I.10) under the section 'Vedanā-anupassanā' or 'Observation of Feeling' is very important and significant for the understanding of meditation in general and organization of supernormal power in particular. It is principally through feeling that we become conscious of ourselves, that we are where the bodily feeling is; that we move when the feeling moves; and that we identify ourselves with the feeling. The feeling appears to be our inmost core so much as to make us feel involuntarily that we shall be wherever the feeling will or may appear. This is probably one of the main reasons in oriental and particularly Buddhistic ideology that has traditionally given rise to the transmigration and rebirth theory. Those who deny it are generally regarded as heretics or followers of heretical doctrine, such as Chārvāka, Bārhaspatya, Lokāyata (hedonism) or Ucchedavāda (annihilation after death) by the Buddhists.

'Transmigration of souls' is not accepted in Buddhism for the simple reason that the inner or inmost immutable principle in the form of individual self or soul (attā in Pāli, ātmā in Sanskrit) was found neither by the Buddha, nor by any one of his enlightened disciples. But this non-acceptance of the 'transmigration of soul' after death does not preclude the rebirth theory. For, according to Budhhistic psychology, the series of mental moments never ceases to continue throughout the ages, till or provided the link of the series be broken by the realization of Nibbāna. The link from the last moment of one's death or decease to the first moment of one's birth is the emergence or manifestation of the resultant consciousness (Vipāka Paṭisandhi Viññāṇa) of the individual who is dying or is dead. The consciousness (viññāṅa) is accompanied with its concomitants of which the feeling is one.

This feeling perforce enlivens us to the experience of the new life associated with pain, pleasure and their remission even without our remembering the past. The resultant consciousness accompanied with feeling, etc. does not let us forget, for a single moment, the experience of life as we know it. Let us suppose a person to be in torment, the person might forget all except the torment in progress, the forgetfulness of everything

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else would not free the tormented person from feeling the torment or torture every moment. Similarly, the last moment of death pang is not final but it revives in a new series of feeling painful, pleasant, or neutral, no matter whether the past experience with the parting death-pang is remembered or not in the present. Viewed in this perspective, the Buddhistic theory of rebirth would not look strange even at present.

To resume our discussion on feeling (vedanā), the commentary says:

> Thus the Blessed One (Bhagavā), having said (taught) the rūpa (material) kammaṭṭhāna (device of practice) and saying (commencing) the arpūa (immaterial) kammaṭṭhāna, said (taught) it by means of feeling (vedanā). There are two kinds of kammaṭṭhāna, rūpa kammaṭṭhāna and arūpa-kammaṭṭhāna, these are also called rūpapariggaha and arūpa-pariggāha (pariggāha means taking up a meditative object either material or immaterial). Therein the Blessed One saying (commencing) the rūpa-kammaṭṭhāna either briefly or in detail (teaches) it by the defining (or analyzing) of four material elements.

This kammaṭṭhāna is extensively given in the 11th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. Briefly, the body is said to be composed of four elements, earth, water, heat (fire), and air. This division or analysis of the body is made to dissolve the conception of a separate entity, within the unified body as the being (sutta) or person (posa, or puggala) and to establish the body as made up of separate elements only as it is.

In detail, the body is mentally separated into its component parts numbering thirty-two items. This separation into parts is basically the same as the analysis of the body into four elements. The purpose of doing so is also the same as given above, that is, the realization of the absence of any soul within the body. There are a number of suttas dealing with the brief and detailed methods of thinking on elements. This topic is dealt with in the 'Kāyagatā Sati' or 'Memory of Body' (*Majjhima* III.19) and also in the 15th chapter of the 2nd phase of this research.

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In the Pāli literature—canonical, commentatorial, and even non-canonical-—we meet with a number of instances wherein monks or nuns attaining arhatship moved, or could move up above the air, or travel through the air, or resort to the snow-mountain towards the North. The *Yogasūtra* with its commentary has also confirmed that the attainment of 'Pratibhā' (III. 33) or the precursor of Liberation Knowledge entails all knowledge (III. 36). Although the knowledge of liberation in the two systems differs in fundamental principle, the supernormal power and knowledge inherent in the subtle body generated thereby seem to be not very different in them.

To push the subject further, the Conscious Principle termed 'puruṣa' in the *Yogasūtra* (III. 35 and 49) conceived as the Pure Seer (draṣṭā, I.3 sūtra) is the self-knowing entity devoid of matter and mind in its constitution. This conception, however, might help yogins in regarding matter and mind as unconscious and extraneous. In meditating with this conception, mind would be as extraneous as matter only in conception of course. The conception of the imperceptible Seer herein would have to be doggedly kept in mind. If the yogins lapse and lose this conception, they would be unknowingly meditating in the Buddhistic line, so to say.

Role of Feeling in Five-Touch-Group

The importance of the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (Majjhima I.10) may be guessed by the space of 68 pages of closely printed Sinhalese script devoted to it in its commentary. The Blessed One opened this precept with the most significant introduction: "Ekāyano ayam Bhikhave! maggao...Nibbānassa sacchi-kiriyāya yadidam cattāro Sati-paṭṭhāna." This Pāli sentence means 'Singly leading is this path, monks! for the realization of Nibbāna, which is these four memory-establishments'. These four observations are conducted on body, feeling, mind, and dhammas. 'Ānāpāna' is given in the beginning of the observation on the body. After the treatment of bodily practice, the commentary deals with the observation on feeling.

Opening the topic, the commentary says:

Therein, who feels it? None, neither (any) being (satta) nor (any) person (puggala) feels it. Whose feeling is it? No one's,

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it is neither any being's nor person's feeling...Feeling (vedanā) only is felt. . . It is a mere customary usage (to say) that I feel it. . . .So it is with the soul (attā, ātman).

To resume the discussion begun in the preceding section, the commentary says:

Commencing the immaterial device, the Master teaches it mostly through Feeling (vedanā). There are three kinds of inclinations (or tendencies, abhinivesa) in immaterial device through Phassa (contact or touch), through Feeling and through Mind. How? Some one's Phasso becomes manifest, when it grips the material device briefly or in detail and (thereby) the mind and mental concomitants firstly fall in that support; (the phasso or contact or touch) arisen from touching that support, it becomes mainfest (Pākaṭo). Someone's Feeling, arisen from experiencing that support, becomes manifest. Someone's Consciousness (Viññāṇa), airsen from knowing that support after gripping it, becomes manifest.

"Therein in the case of one whose touch becomes manifest, there does not arise the touch only; but with it the feeling (vedanā), experiencing that very support, arises as well; and the perception (saññā), perceiving it (support), does also; the volition (cetanā), willing it (support), does likewise; and the consciousness (viññāṇa), knowing it (support), does too; thus one grips it (that support) by the touch-group (consisting of five items, viz., the touch, the feeling, the perception, the volition, and the consciousness). (Similarly, in the case of) one whose feeling becomes manifest, does not arise the feeling only; but with it the touch by touching...the perception by perceiving...the volition by willing. . .the consciousness by knowing (that very support) arises too; thus one grips it by the five-touch-group.

(Similarly) in the case of one whose consciousness becomes manifest, there does not arise the consciousness only? but with it the touch by touching. . . .the feeling by experiencing . . . . the perception by perceiving. . . . the volition by willing (that support), arises too; thus one grips it by the five-touch-group.

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The gist of this whole passage is the emphasis put on the purport that the five-touch-group is sure to come together on any support. Of course one of the three inclinations (abhinivesa) may be manifest at a time, but the five-touch-group will cert-tainly arise on that very support at the same time. For the mind and its concomitants arise, stay, and cease on any support together. And the five-touch-group belongs to the mind and its concomitants.

Further on the commentary says:

> Herein however the Blessed One saying (commencing) the immaterial Kammaṭṭhāna said (taught) it by means of feeling. For, if it be said by means of the touch or by means of the knowing or consciousness, it (kammaṭṭhāna) does not become manifest, but appears like darkness; said (taught) by means of the feeling, it becomes manifest. Why (is it so)? On account of the arising of feelings being manifest (it is so).

Obviously the feeling is the most important means for the organization of all the immaterial devices or practices. And mostly the supernormal powers and branches of knowledge belong to the immaterial category. Hence the gist of this commentary is enough to convince one the fact that the memory of feeling is a never-failing guide to the little-known practice of organizing the 'divine senses' as well. Buddhaghosa's inclination (abhinivesa) to, or rather his insistence on, the subtle method through touch therefore appears to be based on his own experience in 'ānāpāna' and is worth trying.

This very description of this commentary is also found in full under the section of the 'Vedanā-anupassanā' in the commentary on the 'Satipaṭṭhāna Vibhaṇga' of the second book of the *Abhidhamma*. Both the books of the commentary give us the names of a number of suttas in the first three Nikāyas and the entire Vedanā Samyutta of the third Nikāya. In these, as in many other suttas, "The Blessed One, having said the material kammaṭṭhāna turning it over (Vinivaṭṭetvā, in exposition) by means of feeling." As a matter of fact, the feeling of the body and its positions and movements can be easily

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remembered even in the 'Observation of the Body' (Kāyānupassanā), which cannot be well followed by means of touch.

In the memory of respiration, however, the touch method as described and advocated by Buddhaghosa is certainly subtler than the general practice of feeling as well. The feeling must get finer and finer with the respiration getting smoother and fainter, as described also in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*. This passage of the text is quoted and commented on in the *Visuddhi-magga*. But the English translation of the corresponding passage is not found in substance that the respiration long or short becomes subject (sukhumataram) with the addition of each factor preliminary to samādhi than before without this addition. The simile of the bronze gong is beautifully and appropriately given and illustrated in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*, which is also reproduced in full in the *Visuddhi-magga* and the two commentaries on the Sutta and the Vinaya. This is the substance of the said simile:

> For example, when a bronze gong is struck, there at first arises a gross (or loud) sound. If the sign of these loud sounds be well learnt, well kept in mind, and well retained, than even if the loud sound cease, thereafter the subtle sound arises. If the sign of these subtle sounds be well learnt, kept in mind, and retained, then, even if the subtle sound cease, thereafter also (the consciousness of) the mind occurs (or persists) because of (the mind's gripping) the support (the mind had) on the sign of the subtle sounds.

The above simile is quite simple and means to say that the fainter and fainter sounds, arising from an initial loud sound produced by striking a gong, can be detected only by grasping the sign of a preceding sound well. Then the passage comes to the purpose of the simile: "Similarly, the subtler and subtler inbreathing and outbreathing can be detected by the mind's grasping the sign of the preceding subtle respiration well. By this means the mind (being calm) does not get distracted." This apt simile is certainly to the point and explains the subtle nature of ānāpāna satsifactorily.

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Psychic Phenomena in Anapana

The diversion of mind in meditation from the straight path can be detected often by various psychic phenomena. The straight path is the way to 'samādhi', the state of mental equilibrium or calmness. This state gets intensified, or clarified, or rarified in different fields of samādhi. In form trance or 'jhāna', the state of samādhi intensifies; the mental speech (vitakka) and deliberation through concept (vicāra) gradually vanishes; thereafter joy and pleasure also diminish; the remaining mental concentration with neutral feeling, as if amalgamated with memory, assumes an extraordinary serenity in the form trance. This appears to be the straight path not diverted to extraneous fields, psychic or non-psychic. The natural progress from the fourth trance is seemingly the successive trances of formless and limitless expanse.

In the trance brought about for supernormal powers and branches of knowledge, the state of samādhi should presumably clarify. The manipulation of the clarified mental field through 'resolve' or determined 'will' would produce the supernormal phenomena. This, however, is the psychic phenomenon only and would stay probably till influence of the resolve and will of the agent or the operator lasts. This phenomenon would vanish when the premeditated time, or period of time, expires; or lapses occur due to the removal of the influence; or the power and knowledge are neutralized, nullified, and made inert. The causes of these lapses and failures mostly stem from the mental shortcomings of the agent. Buddhistic literature has many instances of these unfortunate events or occasions, which were ostensibly due to diversion inherent in an unliberated mind.

The state of samādhi rarefies and gets subtler in the memory-practice of respiration. It is probably so, because the nature of respiration is to slow down when the physical body is in relaxation. With the slowing down of respiration, the mental state also rarefies. This is naturally the straight path of the practice of respiration. But the diversion owing to expectation may occur in ānāpāna memory-practice too. When the diversion assumes noticeable forms of diverse category, the variety of these forms is often spoken of as experiences (anubhūtis) by some yogins, while in Pāli literature this variety is known as 'sign' (nimitta).

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The occurrence of these experiences and the appearance of signs are indeed a sort of indication of some progress in practice. But one should stick to the main objective in view. Any serious work on yoga does not fail to warn its devotee against the pitfall of diversion and delusion.

The signs, said to have been seen and experienced in this Kammaṭṭhāna of ānāpāna, are mentioned in the said Vinaya commentary, the *Visuddhi-magga*, and the *Vimutti-magga*. These signs are not given in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*, nor in the Pāli suttas concerned with this topic. Most of the signs described in these books seem to have been tinged with the pre-conception about the incoming and outgoing air of respiration. The air is conceived as made up of bubbles or particles (cuṇṇavicuṇṇa); the series of incoming and outgoing breaths would be imagined as a current, as a river, or as a string; the bubbles or particles of air would appear as tiny grains. These ingredients of air with its length or extent in continuation, when imagined or realized, would explain some signs' appearance easily. But Buddhaghosa advises the beginner: "Now he is to grasp that sign neither by colour nor to review it (sign) by characteristic." The *Vimutti-magga* also says: "This (air perception) does not depend on colour or form." (p. 159).

The above guidance shows that the elders were aware of the practice of gazing at the nose-tip while practising ānāpāna. And the colour of the air entering or leaving the nostrils must have been seen by some practisers so much as to need warning them against it. For the main purpose of the practice is to generate and maintain memory in order to cleanse and liberate the mind from defilements as soon as they arise. And the mind is not to be entangled with extraneous diversions. Some natural signs, however, appear during the practice. Buddhaghosa says:

> In the case of some (practisers), even from the time of attending to the (practice of) counting (respiration), when the bodily pain (kāya-daratha) gets subsided gradually through the cessation of gross respirations, both the body and the mind (of theirs) become light lahukam); the body (sariram) becomes (feels) as if it would jump up in the sky.
> This is the natural buoyancy obtaining in meditation.

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Further in his work our savant says:

> When he (the beginner) is thus engaged in the practice (of respiration through touch or contact), the sign (nimitta) appears (to him) soon. But it (the sign) is not the same for all (practisers); on the contrary, in the case of some (practisers), it (the sign) is soft of touch and arises like a tuft of wool, or a tuft of cotton, or a current of air, so is it said by some (elders).

We do not know who these some (ekacce) are. The elder Upatissa in the *Vimutti-magga* also says thus:

> To the yogin.....the image (sign) arises with a pleasant feeling similar to that which is produced in the action of spinning cotton or silk cotton. Also it is likened to the pleasant feeling produced by a breeze. Thus in breathing in and out, air touches the nose or the lip and causes the setting up of air perception mindfulness. This does not depend on colour or form. This is called the image. (p. 158 and 159)

Immediately ahead of the above, the *Vimutti-magga* mentions other spots for concentration and says:

> If the Yogin develops the image and increases it at the nose-tip, between the eye-brows, on the forehead or establishes it in several places (separately), he feels as if his head were filled with air. Through increasing in this way his whole body is charged with bliss. This is called perfection. (p. 159)

Buddhaghosa, however, could have never called this diversion 'perfection', neither might the elder Upatissa have meant it. Hence we have expressed the opinion in the previous phases of this research also that the retranslated work of the *Vimutti-magga* before us might scarcely serve the purpose of a practical guide to Buddhistic yoga. For doubt in yoga arises at a critical point and the original work is not available to clear the point.

Again the *Vimutti-magga* says further:

> And again, there is a yogin: he sees several images from the

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beginning. He sees various forms such as smoke, mist, dust, sand of gold, or he experiences something similar to the pricking of a needle or to an ant's bite. (p. 159)

The experience of needle-pricking and ant's bite is abnormal and not mentioned in the *Visuddhi-magga*. Buddhaghosa, however, tries to bring the matter to a close as follows:

This is, however, the decided opinion (vinicchayo) in the commentaries: This (sign) surely appears to some like a star-form, a gem-cluster, a pearl-cluster; and to some (the sign becoming) rough of touch like a cotton-seed, a wooden peg; and to some like a spider's thread, a flower-garland, a smoke-puff, and to some like a spread-out cobweb, a cloud-film, a lotus-flower, a chariot-wheel, a moon-disc, and a sun-disc.

The list of signs given in the preceding paragraph and said to have been seen in practising ānāpāna is apparently bewildering. It shows that the practice was widespread among and depended upon by the then members of the Saṇgha. But it is strange that these two savants, Buddhaghosa and Upatissa, do not or rather would not mention the manifestations of supernormal powers said to be accomplished through this practice also in the suttas. It is probably due to the great importance given to the kasiṇa practice in the commentatorial literature. The artificial kasiṇa is doubtlessly a great invention possibly of a little later Buddhism, which has been partially dealt with from the sixth chapter to the thirteenth of the third phase of this research.

To resume the topic, Buddhaghosa ascribes the diversity of sign-appearance to the diversity of individual pe.ception thus:

This sign is born of perception, caused by perception, and produced by perception (saññājam, saññā-nidānam, and saññā-pabhavam, respectively). Hence due to the diversity of perception (saññā), the diversity of sign appears, thus should this be understood.

It is to be noticed here that the Saññā (perception) means

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'knowing' in a lighter manner than 'viññāṇa' (knowing sufficiently).

Miscellaneous Achievements of Anapana

The efficacy of this practice in checking the 'vitakka' very quickly is authenticated in the *Visuddhi-magga* by the relevant quotation from the suttas. The *Vimutti-magga* puts this thing in a form of catechism thus:

> All formations are endowed with initial and sustained application of thought [conventional translation of 'vitakka' and 'vicāra', respectively] according to planes. That being so, why is only (the) initial application of thought (vitakka) suppressed in mindfulness of respiration, and not the other (that is, vicāra)? It is used here in a different sense. Discursiveness is a hindrance to meditation, jhāna. In this sense, it is suppressed. (p. 165-166)

By suppressing not only vitakka but vicāra also, the unique stage of form trance is achieved.

The most wonderful achievement of the ānāpāna practice however appears to be the knowledge of the exact movement of the physical death displayed by a number of monks and recorded by Buddhaghosa towards the end of the Ānāpāna-sati-kathā in the 8th Chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. These monks are understood to be all 'arhats' (liberated ones). Their individual names and places are given. But only one of the four instances is stated in detail. It is the case of one of the two monks known as Two Brothers. The one brother-monk on a certain full moon day was accompanying or accompanied by the members of the local congregation. He went to his dwelling place and stood up on the strip of ground used for walking to and fro (caṇkama) and looked up at the moon. Considering over his life-expectation, he said to the congregation of monks:

"How have you seen (other) monks passing away into Nibbāna before now?" The question itself indicated that the questioner was indirectly hinting at his own attainment of

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arhatship and that his physical end was near. The curiosity of the listeners must have heightened, as their answer shows:

> There some said: 'We have seen them passing away into Nibbāna seated in seat'. Some said (in reply): 'We have seen them (passing away into Nibbāna) seated in the cross-legged posture up in the sky before now'. The elder (Thera) said: 'Now I shall show you one (myself) passing away into Nibbāna even walking to and fro'. Then he drew a line on (the ground of) the walking strip and said: 'I shall go from this end of the strip (of walking place) to the other end and, turning back (therefrom) and just arriving at this line, shall pass away into Nibbāna.' So saying he stepped on the walking strip and, having gone to the other end and turning back (therefrom), passed away into Nibbāna just at the moment of stepping on the (already drawn) line with one foot (of his).

The above description however wonderful raises some questions. Firstly, the realization of Nibbāna is personally subjective and is to be accepted presumably only on trust by others. Secondly, the knowledge of one's decease in the above case is so minutely worked out that it must belong to the supernormal category. Thirdly, the account, even if true, is obviously non-canonical. Nevertheless we cannot ignore the value of this ānāpāna practice. It is to be noted that the knowledge of one's own decease beforehand is generally found in liberated monks textually also. But Buddhaghosa says, in the passage concerning the above-mentioned monk's passing away, that the exact knowledge of this or such event is invariably displayed only by the arhats who obtain arhatship through practising ānāpāna in the perfect manner. Other arhats who obtain arhatship through practising other kammaṭṭhānas (than that of ānāpāna) may or may not display the exact knowledge of their passing away. This sort of statement made by our savant is certainly exceptional. He must have been fully aware of what he is stating. The zeal for his favourite thesis is sometimes observable in his interesting statements.

We know that the Master declared that he would pass away after three months as described in the Mahāparinibbāna-sutta.

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Many of his principal disciples also knew their approaching end. They are said to have asked the Master for permission to passing away, probably because they were doing so before him. Similarly did many principal nuns, viz, Mahāpajāpati Gotami with her five hundred companions all liberated, Yaśodharā with her numerous friends all liberated, Uppalavaṇṇā, etc. The parting declaration of liberation and the last-time iddhi-exhibition of these illustrious nuns are given extensively in the "Theri-apadāna" under their respective apadānas numbered 2-7, 3-8, 2-9, respectively. These monks (and nuns) followed a variety of kammaṭṭhānas as mentioned in the ānāpāna-sati-sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (III.18 and ānāpāna is only one of the kammaṭṭhānas.

Survey of General Principles of Supernormal Senses

There are only particular devices for organizing and developing the two senses, viz. hearing and seeing, on the supernormal line in the Buddha's system of meditation. The remaining three senses viz., smelling, tasting and touching, have not been given any direct device for their supernormal development. The feeling has a prominent role in meditative system, even if the five-touch-group (viz touch, feeling, perception, willing, and knowing or consciousness) is jointly available generally in mental phenomena.

The sensation of touch, in contact with the incoming and outgoing air of respiration with the inner membranes of the nostrils, nose-tip, or upper lip just below the nose, is recommended by Buddhaghosa as a subtle device of practising ānāpāna. Upatissa also supports this device in a way side by side with the textual method. This touch device may be utilized also for the development of supernormal sense of touch, although the latter is not mentioned by either of the two savants. Nevertheless the feeling appears to be the medium of conducting ānāpāna in the text and thus the efficient device for this as well as for a general purpose.

The sense of smelling appears to be allied to that of touch in contact with the nostrils. Should the sense of touch be dexterously manipulated with deeper breath, the clue of developing the sense of smell may probably be discovered. The sense of taste is obviously overlooked in a life of remuneration. But for

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the sake of yogic knowledge the development of taste may not remain ignored or neglected for long.

The sense of hearing is a little more difficult than that of seeing. It thus appears that the latter is taken up for development earlier than or before the former. But to all appearances the sequence of the text must have been generally what was in practice in those early times. If so, the device of developing the sense of hearing may be undertaken earlier than or before that of seeing. We have, however, the classical instance of a Licchavi prince who is said to have accomplished the 'Divine eye', but to have been refused the instruction of developing the 'divine ear'. The sequence in this case was just the reverse; the 'divine eye' was taught at first; then the 'divine ear' was requested to be taught and was refused to be done so. Possibly either of the two senses could be separately and independently organized irrespective of the sequence. At any rate, both the senses of the divine category could be found in the same monk or yogin. We have ample evidence in the text that these phenomena really occurred and were operated.

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III

Organization and Development of Divine Ear

Definition of Divine Ear

FROM THE text it appears the divine ear is the capacity of hearing sound physical, psychic, or mystical by means of a meditatively developed ear. The sound is divine, if it be made or uttered by heavenly beings. If an actual talk between some persons be heard by a yogin living far off beyond any possibility of overhearing it, the hearing of this talk is regarded as due to the divine ear of the yogin, while the talk itself is physical. The physical organ of hearing seems to be the base of the divine ear; but the organ itself is not the divine ear. The latter is brought about by dint of meditative effort. The heavenly beings however are born with the ear-organ intact. This ear-organ is imagined to be divine and capable of hearing divine as well as human sound.

Buddhaghosa, in the thirteenth chapter of the *Visuddhimagga*, has tried to give us a sort of definition in dealing with this topic. He defines it thus:

> Therein 'Dibbāya sota-dhātuya' herein, Dibbā is (so called) because of being like the dibba (divine, heavenly; divya in Sanskrit). For the Devas (heavenly beings) have dibba organic ear-element that is produced by (former) merited

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(fruit-bearing) action, unhampered by physical components (such as) bile, lymph, blood, etc., and capable of receiving the stimulus (ārammaṇa, that is, sound), even if (lying) far off owing to its being free from defilements. And also this psychic (ñāna, abhiññā) ear-element of this (practising) monk, produced by (his) power of increasing (meditative) effort, is also like the former (dibba organic ear-element); hence (the latter) is dibbā because of being like the dibbā.

In short, the above exposition substantially means that the word 'dibbā' conveys a sense that the subtle ear-element produced by meditative effort is like that of the heavenly one born of former merited action. In other words, the Divine ear-element is the same wherever it may appear by nature, birth, or meditation. It is divine only because the heavenly beings are supposedly endowed with the subtle ear, and the meditative ear resembles it in the subtlety of hearing. And it is so because the heavenly beings are also known as the divine ones. He further defines it:

> And also because it is obtained by divine meditative dwelling (vihāra) and also because it fully rests on the support of divine meditative dwelling, it is 'dibbā' (divine). It is the ear-element in the sense of hearing and being selfless (Nijjiva).

So we see little difference between the terms, 'dibbā, divine, heavenly, supernormal,' etc.

This ear-element has the capacity of hearing "both the sounds. Which two? Divine and human (sounds); it is as much as to say (that the yogin hears) the sound of heavenly beings and that of men..." The sounds that are far away and very near. These sounds may, however, belong to any category. So the perception of this extraordinary ear is not imaginary; a real sound physical or psychic is heard, the interpretation of this sound may obviously vary. The objective verification of these sounds is what we would have liked to see in these cases. The Master himself used to verify them in cases where it was possible to do so. But most of his conversations with heavenly beings were

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conducted between them and himself alone. Probably these talks were meditative phenomena supernormally alive, dynamic, and purposive. We have indeed several exceptions in which either a part of the talk was everheard or some disciples of the Master were already or later on taken in his company, when these phenomena occurred.

To give an example, we refer to the 4th end 5th sections of the first chapter of this phase above. The love-song of the heavenly musician, Pañcasikha, is a pretty ballad of fourteen stanzas, recorded in the Sakka-Pāñha sutta (*II.* 8) of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. The recital of this song accompanied by the instrumental music must have taken a pretty long time to attract the attention and appreciative remark of the Master. No one of the inhabitants of the Brāhmaṇa village named Amba-saṇḍā overheard the music, nor anyone living about the Indasāla Cave. Who reported this entire discourse to Ānanda, the reciter of the whole Sutta Piṭaka before the first council of five hundred monks? Obviously none other than the Master himself. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, and his retinue were however, in their own heavenly forms or shapes in the Master's cave. So they were invisible to other human beings. Similarly their talk including the music was inaudible to other human ears.

But Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, was seen by everyone in the streets of Rājagaha, when he assumed the form of a young man and walked before the congregation of monks. His gāthās in praise of the Blessed One were also heard by the people. So in defining the divine ear, we shall have to consider its denotation as well. The divine ear also connotes the capacity to grasp divine sound. This logically stands before us as a clear necessity as physical sound does naturally. The possible existence of a divine ear would thus appear to be a clue for identifying divine sound and thereby divine beings. We cannot imagine that all the scriptural literature about and references to these beings were mere figments of our yogins, arhats, and Enlightened Omniscients. If they be so, the very basis of our moral structure in society will be scattered to the winds. Hence in earnest inquiry or at least inquisitiveness of mind is urgently required to unravel this divine secret. Our attitude towards our

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spirital heritage would determine the possibility of ever unravelling this facet of the Master's system.

The definition of this power, as given in the 36th sūtra of the third part of the *Yogasūtra*, limits its application to the 'hearing of divine sound' (divya-śabda-śravaṇa). In this definition we miss the 'divine ear' of the Buddhistic text. But we have in this sūtra-cum-commentary, all the five divine objects of sensory perception. And, according to it, all these powers are obtainable by concentrating the 'samyama' (consolidated meditation) on the discrimination of the self (soul). The acceptance of the self in the yoga (and sāṇkhya) philosophy, or the non-acceptance of the same in Buddhism, would make little difference in the field of meditation for acquiring these powers. For the Buddhistic canon and non-canonical literature admit that these powers are obtained and possessed by non-Buddhist yogins as well. This admittance of other yogins by Buddhists is a guarantee of the universality of yoga.

Buddhaghosa's Method of Organization

The universality of yoga should have diverse methods of practice for producing the supernormal power of sense-perception as well. Towards the end of the preceding section we have seen how the *Yogasūtra* gives us a method of producing this power through the discrimination of the self. The practice of separating oneself from the body and the mind and the mental concomitants is certainly productive of many potentialities described in the third part of the *Yogasūtra*. From many suttas of the Pāli canon in Buddhism we learn that the realization and maintenance of selfless state (arhatship) brings about several supernormal powers in the wake of its attainment. It is to be noted here that the state of selflessness in Buddhism, from the viewpoint of a yogin, would not be practically different from the state of the imperceptible self in the yoga philosophy. Thus the practice of concentrating one's attention on the inmost core of consciousness or conscious void will or may generate several powers of the supernormal category.

There are, of course, separate practices for different items of 'iddhi', or 'siddhi', or 'vibhūti,' in Buddhistic, mystical, or Yogasūtra systems of yoga respectively. So Buddhaghosa gives

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us a separate course of practice for producing the divine ear in the thirteenth chapter of the Visuddhi-magga. He says: "How is it (the divine ear element) to be produced? The (practising) monk, having accomplished the basic jhāna (trance) productive of supernornal knowledge (abhiññā) and arisen therefrom, should at first attend, through the mind (collected) in the preliminary samādhi, to the sounds (occurring) within the natural (normal) hearing range. These gross sounds at a distance are (as follows):"

> In the forest the sound of lions etc.; in the monastery, the sound of songs, the sound of drums, the sound of conches, the sound of the recitation of novices and young monks reciting (the scripture) with (their) full vigour, the sound of (their) ordinary talk like 'what? Sir! what? friend!'; the sound of birds, the sound of the wind, the sound of footsteps, the hissing sound of boiling water, the sound of palm leaves drying in the sun, the sound of ants etc., etc. In this manner he (the practising monk) should attend to quite gross sound in the beginning and then gradually to more and more subtle sounds.

The above gradations of sounds are arranged from gross to subtle, but they are obviously symbolic only. We may choose our own scale of sounds. From the viewpoint of practice, however, a series of constant sounds would be more useful than that of accidental, disrupted, or irregular sounds.

The gross sounds mentioned above are not easily available at present. So they will have to be changed for sounds to be heard usually in places chosen for our practice. Since our savant does not appear to be systematic in his list of gross sounds, we may take up any gross sound or sounds occurring constantly at some distance, so that a little effort might be needed to direct our attention thereto. The gross sounds of gongs, drums, and conches as listed above would certainly prove nice supports, inasmuch as these sounds slowly fade away with reverberations growing finer and finer. The sound of birds may be harsh, sharp, or sweet; but the savant might have meant herein small chirping birds that are plentiful even at present. Their chirping sounds are sharp, sweet

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and often constant. The human sound is however pregnant with meanings and emotions and therefore might be unfavourable to the meditative mood of a practiser.

The sound of wind, footstep, palmleaves drying up, and ants may be taken for a fine or subtle sound. The sound of boiling water may or may not be fine, and so would be the sound of wind and footsteps. The sound of the steps of bare feet is fine and noiseless. Hence the capacity of grasping finer sounds will or may be gained by practising to hear a fine sound at a distance. The pattern of sounds gross or subtle would, however, be imperative to be aimed at by a yogin, if the yogin be determined to obtain the divine ear. For the form trance is the mental preception of a pattern of sounds as that of a pattern of visible objects. And the divine ear or divine eye is certainly a phenomenon of form trance. The pattern of sounds is most probably alluded to in the following passage of our savant:

> He (the practising monk) should grasp the sound-sign of sounds (occurring) in the eastern direction. And also in the western, northern, southern, lower (downward), and upper (skyward) directions and also in the eastern intermediate direction and also in the western, northern, and southern intermediate directions, the sound-sign of sounds should be grasped. The sound-sign of gross sounds and also of subtle sounds should be grasped.

It is as much as to say that the sound-sign is to be grasped in every direction by turn and then as a whole. The pattern of sounds occurring all around the atmosphere is alluded to. The yogin would be conscious of a globe of sounds covering himself. Then gradually the sound pattern would lose its physical aspect and the aspect of form element would appear.

So Buddhaghosa says further on:

> These (above-mentioned) sounds (gross and subtle) become manifest to his (the practising monk's) natural (physical ear-cum) mind also. But they become exceedingly manifest to his mind (absorbed) in preliminary samādhi. Grasping the sound-sign (sound itself) in this manner, he thinks (or feels) that now the

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divine ear-element is going to arise. Then the mental adverting (attention), arises on the support of anyone of these sounds. When this (initial moment of) adverting (avajjana) ceases (as usual in the cognitive process), then four or five (moments of) Javana (impulses) run. The preceding three or four (moments) of these (impulses) are called (successively) Preliminary, Approaching (Upacāra,), Conforming (Anuloma), and Transitional (Gotrabhū) moments belonging to the sphere of ordinary experience (kamāvacara). The last fourth or fifth is the absorption (appanā) mind (mental moment) belonging to the sphere of (meditative) form and (the stage of) the fourth trance (jhāna).

This is the usual process of attaining the supernormal stage from ordinary experience, according to our savant's understanding of the commentatorial tradition. And we are not in a position to contradict him without contradicting the tradition he belongs to. But this is said to be the process of a beginner (ādikammika) so far as the moment of absorption (appanā) is concerned. When the yogin is well advanced in practice, the moments of absorption would flow continuously in a trance. In the organization of supernormal powers and branches of knowledge, the advanced yogin would easily and very swiftly pass from the adverting moment through the intermediate ones to the absorption stage. The swiftness of organisation appears to bring about the phenomenon of continuity in such powers as 'iddhi' and divine ear or hearing, among other things.

Our savant then defines the divine ear as this:

Therein the direct knowledge (ñāṇa, abhiññā) arisen with the Absorption-mind (appanācitta) is the divine ear-element (dibba sota-dhātu). Thus (this is) to be understood. To make it (knowledge) steady, the yogin should increase the limit (of space): 'Wihin this (space) I will hear (that is, let me hear) the sound.

The increase is advised to be made gradually from one finger breath to the whole world and even more than that. The reason of fixing the limit and then increasing it appears to be a general

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principle in the Buddhistic system of yoga. The principle of 'firstly gaining the stepping ground, making sure of or consolidating it, and then advancing therefrom' is taught and exemplified in a number of suttas in the text as well. Buddhaghosa is, however, sometimes uncomfortably rigid and impracticably graduating in his stipulation.

Upatissa on Organization

The writer of the *Vimutti-magga*, Upatissa, gives us a short but interesting course of organizing divine hearing or ear. He says explicitly what Buddhaghosa implies in his explanation that supernormal hearing is basically organized on physical hearing. And we might inquire if a person born deaf is capable of gaining this supernormal power. According to the Abhidhamma, we can easily infer that the cause of one's being born deaf, dumb, or blind is the initial rebirth consciousness (paṭisandhi-viññāṇa) devoid of merited roots. This kind of rebirth consciousness would preclude the attainment of supernormal power and knowledge through meditation. But Upatissa goes farther and says: "If one loses physical hearing, one also loses divine hearing." (*Vimutti-magga*, p. 220)

In the 'path of Freedom' (*Vimutti-magga*), Chapter Nine, under the sub-heading Divine Hearing, pp. 219-220, our elder monk, Upatissa, says: ' who practices divine hearing? How is it developed? One who enters the fourth meditation, jhāna, with facility on eight kasiṇas and two kasiṇas cause the arising of divine hearing relying on the physical organ of hearing." The eight kasiṇas are the same as given in the *Visuddhi-magga*, namely, the earth kasṇia, the water, the fire, the air, the blue-green, the yellow, the red, and the white kasiṇas. The two kasiṇas are also the same, viz., the light kasiṇa and the (separated) space kasiṇa. The only difference in the two works is the blue kasiṇa; therein, instead of the blue-green herein and the limited sky kasiṇa in place of the seprated space kasiṇa. The prerequisite of 'facility on eight kasiṇas and two kasiṇas for the arising of divine hearing' mentioned herein indicates a similar tradition followed in both the 4th stage of form trance regarded as the basic trance of supernormal power and knowledge in the *Visuddhi-magga*.

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The elder Upatissa obviously gives us only a textual version for the development of divine hearing. He says:

> How is it (divine hearing) developed? The new yogin practises the four bases of supernormal power and controls his mind. He enters the fourth meditation, jhāna. Rising therefrom peacefully and depending on the physical organ of hearing, he attends to the sound sign.

These four bases are the four 'iddhi-padas' that have been treated of under the sub-heading 'Definition of Iddhi and Iddhi-pāda' of the second chapter in the third phase of this research. Even his brief treatment of these four bases under the sub-heading, procedure of Developing Supernormal Power (ix p. 212) will be found of little help to practisers. The treatment is as follows:

> How is supernormal power developed? Here a bhikkhu develops the basis of supernormal power which is endowed with the activities of endeavour and the concentration of will. It is the same with the concentration of energy, the concentration of thought and the concentration of scrutiny.

These four bases of 'iddhi' (supernormal) power mentioned in the text are little understood at present. Even the explanation of Buddhaghosa discloses that these bases had lost their earlier significance by the time he composed his work from the commentaries. The Master has highly praised these and declared, in the Mahāparinibbāna (Great passing away) sutta (Dīgha II.3). before Ānanda, that he (the Master) had fully developed ... Channelized ... these four bases of supernormal power: "If the Tathāgata (the Buddha, that is, I) so wish, Ānanda! he might live an aeon (kappa) or the remaining period of an aeon."

From the *Milinda Pāñha* (Question; IV, on Devadatta) we learn that one sixth part of this (bhadda) kappa (aeon) had already passed when Devadatta broke the Saṇgha and that the five-sixth part of the Kappa still remains. In conservative commentatorial tradition, the 'kappa' has been interpreted as

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the ordinary lifespan (āyukappa) but the context clearly points to the meaning of an aeon. The commentary on this sutta actually quotes the opinion of the elder Mahāsiva-tthera, who quite rationally proves that the Buddha could prolong his life upto the end of this Bhadda kappa. But the tradition rejects his opinion and accepts the meaning of the lifespan. Why should the tradition reject this kind of longevity for our Gautama Buddha, when it has tolerated a number of incomprehensible qualities and marvels in the Buddha? We shall deal with this and similar topics in the later phase of this research.

To resume the topic, the work says further:

> Hearing a sound afar off, or ... nearby, ... a gross sound or ... a fine sound, he attends to the sound-sign. Hearing a sound from the east, he attends to the sound-sign. Thus as to all regions ...He hears both sounds, namely, divine sounds and human sounds, also sounds afar and sounds near.

This passage is not dissimilar to the description given in the *Visuddhi-magga*. But we are at a loss to understand what a divine sound would be like, although we have several instances of divine touch. Except the instance of bewitching music of heavenly damsels, the sounds of heavenly beings in conversation does not seem, from available stories, to be extraordinary. The *Vimutti-magga* sometimes quotes a tradition that is either untraceable or apparently obscure. For example, it says further:

> Here the predecessors have said: At first the new yogin hears the sound of beings within himself that he hears the sound of beings outside his body. Thence he hears the sound of beings anywhere. Thus he strengthens attention gradually.

Again it is said: "At first the new yogin cannot hear the sound of beings within himself, because he is not able to hear fine sounds. He cannot reach the field of these (sounds) with the physical ear." The above tradition is strange and obscure, so far as the sound of beings within himself (oneself) is concerned. It cannot be the buzzing sound heard within the closed ears, for this sound is patent and cannot be unheard. The mention of

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beings within himself (oneself) is strange and such beings as these are not mentioned in the text and commentary, as existing within one's body. Hence the tradition the elder monk quotes is apparently strange and obscure.

"Fine sounds or gross sounds, sounds afar off or sounds nearby could be heard with divine hearing". This property of divine hearing or ear is of course commonplace. What is remarkable in this work is the sentence already quoted above: "If one loses physical hearing, one also loses divine hearing." What would happen, if one loses physical hearing after one has acquired divine hearing? To all appearances, divine hearing is mental perception and not dependent on the physical ear or hearing.

Yogasutra on Divine Ear

So far we have investigated the practical side of the organization of the divine ear or hearing as described in the relative section of the *Visuddhi-magga* and the *Vimutti-magga*. Now we shall see what the *Yogasūtra* and its commentaries and sub-commentaries have to say about this phenomenon. The question would at first arise as to how this phenomenon is produced and what constitutes divine hearing. The sūtra 41 of the third part of the *Yogasūtra* says: By concentrating on the relation of the ear and the space, (there is produced) the divine (divya) ear (hearing). The commentary explains this aphorism as below:

> The space is the basis of all the ears and also of all sounds. For it is said (by Pañcaśikka): All experience the same kind of hearing limited in space, all those (persons) whose hearing organs are situated in the similar space. Now it also said that the form (shape, characteristic) of this space (sky) is resistancelessness (anāvaraṇa). And again, because a formless substance is seen (known) to be resistanceless, it (the sky) is also pervasive (that is, the pervasiveness of the sky is also patent). The (existence of the) ear is inferred from the perception of sound. For between the deaf and the not deaf, one (the latter) grasps sound, while the other (the former) does not grasp it. Hence the ear has sound for its object. And the yogin who practises concentration on the relation of the ear and the sky, gains the divine ear.

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The above explanation is further clarified in the sub-commentaries of Miśra, Bhikśu, Nāgojibhaṭṭa and others. It is to be understood that the yoga system of Patañjali follows the Sāṇkhya system of Kapila's philosophy. As such, mind is regarded as made up of fine sāttvic matter; and the fine matter is said to have emerged from the still finer ego-element (aham taṭṭva) of the primordial intellect (buddhi or mahātattva). Thus mind is held to be as much material in its composition as any fine matter. Miśra makes this point clear:

> Even if all the ears partake of ego-element, their basis is the space comprising the hollow of the ear canal. This hollow-space is the seat (āyatana) of the ear. It is so because by helping or by harming it (the hollow-space of the ear canal), the ear is found to be helped or harmed. And sounds are likewise affected as the ear. When it is required to perceive the (particular) sound (arising) from earthly sources, the ear residing in the hollow of the ear canal requires the specific sound contained in the sky (element) supporting the ear.

In short, the hollow space of the ear canal is the seat of the ear. The ear hears external sound through the sound contained in the hollow space. When the sound comes in from an earthen substance, it is a particular sound. And for hearing this earthen sound, the ear has to seek a similar sound contained in the hollow space. For the space or the sky is the home of all sounds.

This simple principle, according to him, is operative in the other four perceptions of smell, etc., (taste, touch, vision) as well. He clarifies it further:

> And it is thus that the ear made up of ego-element is like a piece of iron; the sound contained in and produced by the mouth of a speaker is like a load-stone gem (ayaskānta maṇi) the ear thus attracted (by this sound) perceives the sound coming by its own successive formations (vritti), from the mouth of the speaker, just at the mouth (when the sound issues out of it). In this manner there occurs the perception of sound originating in (any) place and direction.

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The ego-element can be experienced in the organs of perception, if we feel directly that we are the perceiver of sound etc. In reality the only experience we are aware of is, according to Buddhistic psychology, the perception of sound, etc. without any perceiver.

The sub-commentators of this sūtra give us an impression that they logically infer the existence of sense-organs only from and through the object of perception, such as the ear through hearing sound, etc. But in doing so, they include the sense-organs in the ego-element that is material in essence. The soul is regarded on the other hand, as some entity of pure self-consciousness having neither body nor mind. As the soul is not directly knowable by mind, it may be said to lie entirely beyond any yogic experience. It is just for this reason that the Buddha has shown its (the Soul's) untenability in the very first discourse, the Brahmajāla sutta of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Nevertheless the materiality of mind, as asserted in the Yoga philosophy, gives us substantial help in comprehending the working of supernormal powers.

Sound is perceived and experienced by means of the ear, because, according to these commentators, both the sound and the ear are based upon the sky or space-element comprising the hollow space of the ear canal. And both these sound and ear, are alike in their essence, that is, sky quality, property and element. So Miśra says:

> And herein comes the (authoritative) saying of Pañcaśikha: 'All experience the same hearing, whose ears lie in the similar limited sky. The meaning is this ... 'The ears of all (persons) occupy the sky. The sky occupied by the ear is produced by the fine matter (tanmātra), whose property or quality (guṇa) is sound and (therefore that sky is itself) possessed of sound property or quality. By this co-operative sound the ear grasps the earthen sounds. Hence there is one kind of hearing and that is sound.

The space or sky that is above and around us is known not by its appearance such as the blue sky; it is taken as gross and made up of fine matter. It is experienced as such only by its

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resistancelessness. In Buddhism, however, the sky limited or open is held to be merely a hollow place unoccupied by the four great elements (mahā-bhūtas) and therefore substanceless. Moreover the open sky is a mere concept (paññatti), according to it. This substanceless sky or space is, however, refuted by these sub-commentators, on so-called logical grounds. Miśra further says:

> The one-kind of hearing is the characteristic (liṅga) of the sky. This one-kind of hearing is therefore the sound indicator... without such hearing as this there is certainly no sound-manifestation, nor such hearing is the quality of earth etc ... Resistancelessness (anāvaraṇa) is the charactristic of the sky also. If there were no sky (space pervading material objects), the material objects limted-in-exten: (murtas would have been so) closely pressed together (that they) could not have been pricked even by needles. And thereby everything would have been covered (coalesced) by everything; nor the resistancelessness (the sky) is only due to the absence of material substance; for this absence is occupied by the presence (of material objects). Neither can the energy of pure consciousness be thought of being the support of this (absence or sky); for it (the energy of pure consciousness) is immutable and thereby devoid (incapable) of being cut off.

The above argument is brought forward by Miśra to prove the substantiality of the so-called empty sky probably as against the Buddhistic viewpoint. He augments the argument further:

> Neither are direction and time found in addition to earth and other substances. Hence that sort of mutation is possessed by the sky alone; it is all clear. When the characteristic of the sky is proved to be resistancelessness (it can be said that) wherever there is (found) resistancelessness there is the sky everywhere. Moreover the all-pervasiveness of the sky is also proved.

This pervasiveness of the sky provides us with a working hypothesis, for the organization and manifestation of supernormal

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phenomena by means of yogic concentration. The Buddhistic experience of central voidness likewise gives us a similar working hypothesis.

Continuation of Yogasutra on Divine Ear

It is strange that the commentary of Vyāsa on the sūtra mentioned in the preceding section has nothing more to add to the main topic of the divine ear than what is given in the sūtra. It is still stranger that the sub-commentators, while dealing extensively with the theoretical aspect of the sky as the basis of the ear and sound, should only briefly touch on the principal topic of divine ear and other sense-organs. Are we to think that they regarded the main topic as something imaginative, impracticable and fictitious? They do not contradict the principle of this power nor do they deny this power in yogins. Hence we have to conclude that the ancient method of organizing divine ear and other organs of sense, together with methods of gaining supernormal powers by means of yogic exercises, was lost or at best not in vogue among them and their colleagues.

Bhikṣu, another sub-commentator, is more prolific than Miśra. He is sometimes indirectly critical of Miśra. He has followed the remainder (pariśeṣa) method herein for arriving at the conclusion. His conclusion, however, is not different from that of Miśra. He has clarified the point of the pervasiveness (vibhutva) of the sky and its substantiality rather better than Miśra. He has also differentiated the sky-element into two kinds, cause and effect. The cause or the casual sky is in the state of inertia (tamoguṇa) and has no capacity to produce sound. The effect or the resulting sky (kārya ākāśa), on the other hand, is developed in contact with other qualities, and begins to be capable of producing sound.

Moreover, he has given us quite an interesting definition of divinity (divyatva). He says: "Divinity (divineness, divyatva) is the state of perceiving the form of fine matter (tanmātrādi rūpa) and subtle sound etc., naturally without concentrating on them methodically." Concentrating on the relation of other sense-organs and their objects, we gain the divine sense-organs, he says. Another sub-commentator, Rāghavānanda Sarasvati, tries to clarify the words and passages of Miśra and is often helpful in understanding the latter. He has cited the mythologically classical

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instance of Sanjaya, the famous reporter of the Great Battle (Mahābhārata Yuddha) fought for eighteen days with the destruction of about five million warriors at Kurukṣetra. He was the son of a heroic mother named Vidulā. He was a prince of Sauvira country, but became the minister of King Dhṛtarāṣṭra and acted as the royal charioteer as well. He is said through the power of Sage Vyāsa to have been endowed with divine sight and hearing. He reported, to the King at the capital, what he saw and heard divinely of the battle far to the north, while he attended on the blind King.

Rāghavānanda Sarasvati writes:

> The divineness of the ear is the grasping of subtle and distant sounds. Through this divine ear given to him (Sanjaya) by (Sage) Vyāsa, Sanjaya dwelling in Hastinapura (the capital of Kuru country) heard the deliberations of the (combatants and inhabitants of Kurukṣetra (the great battle-field) and related these to Dhṛtarāṣṭra (the King). This (instance) is relevant here.

Sage Vyāsa is said to have endowed Sanjaya with this power only for the duration of the great battle. This endowment was made for the benefit of the blind and aged King. If so, what was the reason in selecting Sanjaya for the medium in preference to the King himself ? It might have been so because the former was found to be a medium better than the latter; or because the latter was born blind and also was heavily involved in and bitterly repentant of the final and inevitable issue of the struggle. Thus he was unfit for divine mediumship.

There are several instances of such supernormal sight and hearing temporarily given to persons in yogic and Buddhistic literature. In the Buddhistic system of yoga this phenomenon comes within the supernormal power through resolve (adhiṭṭhāna iddhi). The yogin resolves that his iddhi phenomena be seen or heard by some or many. Bhojadeva or Bhojarāja, an earlier sub-commentator, has only briefly commented on this sūtra. But his comment on the 36th sūtra of the third part is remarkably clear as regards the meaning of divine sense-organs and sensible objects. He equates 'samyama' with practice. Now

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this technical term signifies a collective and successive effort in its three components, namely, 'dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi,' or maintenance of attention, contemplation, absorption, respectively. If this term be equivalent to practice (abhyasyamāna from abhyāsa) referable to the word 'abhyāsa' (practice) in the 12th sūtra of the first part, the process of organizing supernormal powers enumerated in the third part of the *Yogasūtra* loses its formidable aspect and becomes simpler and more hopeful of success.

Although any systematic effort in meditation must pass naturally or imperceptibly from one component to the other, the single process of practice mentioned by Bhojadeva is certainly encouraging. He says in commenting on the above-mentioned 36th sūtra:

> Thence by 'Samyama' (that is, by doing the said consolidated practice) of 'Puruṣa' (pure-conscious-soul conception), even those without samādhi (vyutthitas) produce (supernormal) branches of knowledge. Therein 'Prātibha' is the previously said knowledge (33rd sūtra). By the appearance of that (knowledge) the yogin sees (perceives) subtle objects. 'Śravaṇa' is the knowledge born of the ear (hearing) faculty (indriya). By its excellence (excellent development) the yogin knows (perceives) the sound existing in heaven. 'Vedanā' is the knowledge born of touching faculty . . . used technically. By that (knowledge) the knowledge of divine touch is fully produced. 'Ādarśa' is the knowledge born of the eye (seeing) faculty . . . By its excellence the divine visual knowledge is produced. 'Āsvāda' is the knowledge born of the tongue (tasting) faculty . . . By its excellence the perception of divine taste is produced. 'Vārtā' is the perception of smell . . . nose faculty. By its excellence the divine smell is experienced.

This is worth our consideration.

'Prātibha' mentioned in the 33rd sūtra is excellently explained by Bhojadeva. He says:

> Pratibhā (from which 'Prātibha' is derived) is the knowledge producible through mind alone, irrespective of (other) causes,

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undeceptive, and that arises immediately. Concentrating on this (Pratibhā), 'Prātibha' (the divine knowledge through our own mind or intellect) arises as a forerunner of 'viveka' (separation of self-conscious core from mind and matter) illumination (khyāti) called 'Tāraka' (liberator) knowledge. When it happens, the yogin knows everything without any need of another Samyama.

So the maintenance of the knowledge of liberation is itself a master device for producing most supernormal powers. In the Buddha's system also this master device is clearly recognized, although the soul, that is, the self-conscious core, is denied throughout. We shall deal with this topic in a later phase.

Buddha's Method of Developing Divine Ear

Before trying to practise a device of developing our capacity for hearing subtle sound, we would obviously be inclined to know whether or not someone has acquired this power. Instances of clairvoyance and knowing other's thought are plentiful in scriptures, but those of subtle hearing are, comparatively speaking, very few in scriptures other than Buddhistic ones. For the power of subtle hearing has to be developed through the device of intent and intensive hearing in a sort of samādhi. And sounds, the very objects of hearing, are said to be thorns (impediments) to samādhi. So the loud, harsh, piercing and noisy sound or sounds would be naturally not conducive to arousing this power of fine hearing. The process of hearing should therefore begin at a gross sound and proceed through far and farther sounds to the fine or subtle aspect of sound, till the divine nature of sound appears in a state of samādhi.

The Master has declared before Sāriputta, his principal disciple, in the 12th sutta, the discourse on 'the great Loin's Roar' (Mahā-sihanāda sutta), of the *Majjhima Nikāya:*

> Well Sāriputta! this foolish person, Sunakkhatta, is indeed angry. He must have spoken such words (of denouncement as you report) through anger . . . This much also, Sāriputta! could not be understood by the foolish person, Sunakkhatta: 'It is also (Itipi) that the Blessed One hears, through the

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divine ear element that is pure and beyond the human capacity, both the sounds, that are divine and human, and that are far and near.

This declaration is a definite avowal of the Master that he possessed the divine power of hearing by himself. He taught this power regularly to many disciples. But still we do not know how he organized and developed the divine ear element himself, and devised the method of teaching it to his disciples, as he says in a number of suttas.

The resentment of this precocious Licchavi prince, Sunakkhatta, principally at the Master's reluctance to teach him the method of organizing divine ear, indirectly shows that the teaching method of organizing this power existed. The commentary on the above-mentioned sutta and the 6th sutta of the *Dīgha-nikāya* definitely informs us that this method existed and was not taught to Sunakkhatta. This Licchavi prince had followed the Master as his attendant monk and disciple for three years and succeeded in organizing and developing the divine eye under the Master's tutelage within this period. Hence this unique resentment should convince us of the existence of this particular method taught to his select disciples (of the Master) by himself.

This device is incidentally mentioned in the Mahāli sutta of the *Dīgha-nikāya* by the Master himself. Unfortunately for us the questioner, the slit-lip Licchavi leader named Mahāli, did not put supplementary questions to the Master for the sake of ascertaining the method of organizing this power. He indeed pushed his point of ascertaining the existence of divine sound and the possibility of hearing it further. But absorbed in the Master's exposition of this topic, he probably forgot his original intention and was diverted to higher questions in Buddhism. Had he done so, we would have definitely learnt whether the Master kept any secret regarding the method of organizing divine powers. It is more probable that the compilers and reciters of the collection of suttas kept the really practical things about these powers away from their students, novices and graduates alike. And the later generation of Buddhist savants, too absorbed in Vinaya and Abhidhamma, philosophy and disputation, gave little attention to these matters, so important for us.

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If the method of organizing these powers were non-existent, the resentment of Sunakkhatta, the Licchavi prince and attendant monk of three years' standing, would have been quite unexplainable. This resentment of this Licchavi deserter is, however, evident in several suttas including the above Mahāli and Pāthika suttas of the *Dīgha*, and the Mahāsīhanādasutta of the *Majjhima*. The commentary on the first of these suttas says definitely, that

> 'The Master did not tell (teach) him the preliminary exercise (Parikamma).' "The reason of doing so, according to the commentary, was a former particular demerit incurred or accumulated by him. This (Sunakkhatta) had in the past made a virtuous monk deaf by hitting (him) at the ear-canal. Hence, even if he should do (have done) the preliminary exercise, he was unfit (abhabba) for obtaining 'divine ear.' The Blessed One (Bhagavā) therefore did not tell (teach) him the preliminary."

The reason, as given in the above commentary, is obviously its own notion and usual trick of explaining things unaccountable otherwise through merit complex or like common sense. The reaction of the attendant monk to the Master's refusal was, however, different and rather ridiculous. We may look into this reaction in the next section for a little diversion in the ideology of the then-ruling Licchavi aristocracy. From what we have said above, it will be clear that the particular device of organizing this power is lost. What we find about this device in the *Visuddhi-magga* and the *Vimutti-magga* appears to be its later development. As such their device, however, is not without its practical utility. The latter work gives us unique information: "If one loses physical hearing, one also loses divine hearing." It means that a yogin physically deaf (or born deaf) cannot develop this power. Although not specifically mentioned in the former work, the preliminary exercise would point to the same conclusion. A born deaf person is, however, precluded from any siddhi of yoga on Abhidhammic ground.

By the way, the Bodhisattva had resorted, during his six years' austerities, to a practice not very different from that of the Laya yoga concerning nāda or sound, which is described in the ślokas

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(stanzas) from the 66th to the 106th, after the fourth part of the *Haṭhayoga-Pradīpikā*. This sort of practice was also formerly prevalent in Nepal too. But the Bodhisattva is said to have done so in order to meditate undisturbed by respiration. This practice was dropped and might have never been resumed. We cannot imagine the Bodhisattva or the Buddha listening to the inner sound by closing the ears with fingers or plugs; as is done in Haṭhayoga practice. Probably the Master obtained this power through the process of stabilizing the psychological state of arhatship. The possibility of the acquisition of supernormal powers, through the maintenance of this sort of ego-less pure consciousness, has been already treated of in the preceding two sections.

But we do not know how he taught some or many of his disciples this power specifically. The example of physical sounds given as similes in the second discourse of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* is probably indicative of practice. On the topic of the divine ear-element, the Blessed One says to the young King of Magadha, Ajātasattu, that the monk, having purified . . . softened . . . stabilized the mind in this way, leads and directs the mind for (the acquisition of) divine ear-element. How does the monk lead and direct the mind to the supernormal hearing? It must have been the disposition of hearing itself, that is concentrated. All attention is to be intensified on the hearing organ, so does it seem.

Continuing the discourse, the Master says further: "The monk hears, through the divine ear-element that is pure and superhuman, both the sounds divine and human, which are far and near." This is certainly the achievement of the power and not the device of achieving it. So the device is alluded to the preceding terms meaning 'to lead and direct the mind for divine ear-element,' that is, to hear intently and intensely. For, we are generally engrossed with and by visible objects; our attention is mostly drawn to them away from other perceptible objects; so a special attention to sound is necessary, in order to make its perception reach the category of form-element (Rūpa-dhātu). It is to be remembered that the perception of sound is said to assume its subtle or divine character or nature in form-element.

The exposition of the Master, found in the afore-mentioned

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Mahāli sutta as regards the perception of both the divine sound and the divine vision or form, points to the form-element of both these two phenomena. Hence the Master's method of discernment must have been entirely dependent upon his own meditation and insight. But his method of teaching his disciples in the basic and applied meditation and supernormal power must have been varied, as is evident from several suttas. Unfortunately for us, these likely varieties of his method are lost to our generation. The existence of one of these varieties is however evident from the above sutta and will be still clearer from the discussion over it in the next section. So the method of organizing this power followed by the Master himself is hidden in his omniscience. Now seen at his height, we have forgotten that he must have also started from where we stand at present.

Discussion over Sunakkhatta's Resentment

Resentment against dhamma (doctrine) and vinaya (rule of conduct) has given an important impetus to clarify the nucleus of dhammas, till it reached its present dimension of Buddhistic literature. In the field of Vinaya, it was again the resentment of the people that prompted the Master to purify the conduct of the clergy and the laity of Buddhism through rules and their modifications. Thus the voluble resentment of persons living inside and outside the ambit of Buddhism brought out the huge literature on this world religion. The resentment must have been real and expressed in good faith so as to elicit response from the Master and his reticent disciples, monks, nuns, and laymen. This sort of response has constituted a considerable portion of yoga, philosophy, and code of rules in this system of religious thought.

From the three suttas, Mahāli, Pāthika, and Mahā-sīhanāda mentioned in the preceding section, it is clear that Sunakkhatta, a Licchavi scion in Buddhistic garb, had a real grievance for the Master's refusal of teaching him the device of obtaining the 'divine ear'. As an attendant monk of the Master for three years, he must have been aware of the existence of the particular device imparted to some disciples by the Master. He had already got a device for organizing the 'divine eye' from the Master and also accomplished it to some extent. This success tempted him to learn a similar device for organizing the 'divine ear', in order

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to be able to hear the sound or speech of divine persons. He approached the Master, made his request, and was forthwith refused. Consequently, he was frustrated and angered by the refusal. His reaction, real or imaginary, is recorded in the commentary of the first two Nikāyas on the two of the three suttas mentioned above as follows with the relative text:

"Why does (did) Sunakkhatta not hear those (divine sounds or words)?" This question stems from the statement of Sunakkhatta reported to or before the Master by Mahāli, who had said: "Days before, Sire! more days before, Sunakkhatta, son of Licchavi, approached me where I was and said this to me: 'Before this, Mahāli! I used to follow the Blessed One three years not longer (than that). I see divine forms pleasant, enjoyable, and delightful, to be sure. But I do not hear divine sounds (words) pleasant, enjoyable, and delightful.' Did Sunkkhatta, son of Licchavi, Sire! not hear divine sounds.....that were (really) present or.....not present?" The Blessed One replied that he did not hear divine sounds really present and not non-existent. This answer was definite and the supplementary question was put to the Master further: "What is the cause, Sire! and what is the reason that Sunakkhatta, son of Licchavi, did not hear the divine sounds..... (really) present and not non-existent?"

The commentary then takes up the question, why does (did) Sunakkhatta not hear those (divine sounds)? He, it is said, having approached the Blessed One, begged (the Master to be taught) the preliminary work (Parikamma) of (organizing) divine eye. The Blessed One taught him that. Engaged (in it) as instructed, he having produced divine eye and seen the forms of heavenly beings thought: 'In this (sort of heavenly) bodily form there must be (also) sweet sound. How should I hear that (sound or word)?' He having approached the Blessed One asked the preliminary work of divine ear.

This (man) had made a virtuous monk deaf by hitting the ear-canal (of his) in the past. Consequently he was unfit (abhabba) for gaining divine ear, even if he should do the preliminary work. The Blessed One did not therefore teach him the preliminary work. He, however, took offence against the Blessed One thereat, and thought: "Surely it thus occurs to Samaṇa

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(saint) Gotama: 'I am also of the warrior race (Khattiya), he is also of the warrior race. If his knowledge should increase, he also would be omniscient (sabbaññū). Hence he did not teach me (this knowledge) out of envy.' Becoming a householder gradually (in course of time) he had said this thing to Mahāli, the Licchavi.

This sort of allegation is obviously unthinkable in the world-teacher. The Licchavi monk, nevertheless, took it to heart and finally resorted to the former life of a householder.

The commentary of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* on the discourse of the great Lion's Roar gives a fuller detail of this unpleasant circumstance. It begins thus:

Why was he angry with the Blessed One? For this (man) having before approached the Blessed One asked the preliminary work of divine eye. Then the Blessed One taught him (the device). He having produced the divine eye and increased the light (kasiṇa) and looking (thereby) saw heavenly beings male and female (Devaputtas and Devadhitaras, or divine sons and divine daughters) enjoying divine pleasure in the gardens of heaven (Devaloka known as) Nandanavana, Cittalatā-vana, Phārusaka-vana and Missaka-vana. (Seeing these things, he thought:) 'How sweet would be the sound of these (heavenly beings) who are possessed of such excellent bodies'. And he became desirous of hearing (their) sound. Having approached the All-competent One (Dasabala), he asked the preliminary exercise of divine ear. The Blessed One, however, knowing that he has no competence (Upanissaya) for divine ear-element did not teach (him) the preliminary exercise. For the Buddhas do not tell (teach) the preliminary exercise to him who will have nothing (accomplished) out of it.

The incompetence is not given in this commentary. It is probably that the Master kept silence. But the Licchavi scion in attendance thought otherwise. The commentary says further.

He (the attendant monk) having taken offence thought: 'I

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asked Samana Gotama at first the preliminary exercise for divine eye. He told (taught) me that (exercise, thinking: Let him have it, no matter) whether it be accomplished or not accomplished. I, however, having produced it through the individual effort (of mine), asked (him) the preliminary exercise for divine ear element. He does not tell it to me. Surely it occurs thus to him:

"This ordained (monk) from a royal house (Rāja-pabbajito) having produced the knowledge of divine eye (then after having) produced the knowledge of divine ear-element, (and thereafter having) produced the knowledge of mind-to-mind (ceto pariya, cetasa ceto paricca; other person's) thought and (lastly having) produced the knowledge of the destruction of defilements, will be quite equal to me'. Due to (this sort of) envy and jealousy he does not tell me that:

This is perhaps one of serious allegations made against the most liberal of world-teachers.

This resentment, by the way, proves the existence of specific devices for organizing the supernormal power of subtle eye and ear organs. The Licchavi scion had gained no stage in the knowledge of liberation during his three years' life as a monk. So he could not have made use of the state of liberation for organizing the knowledge of divine eye. His deliberation that he produced it by dint of his own individual effort does not appear to be totally unreasonable. Anuruddha, the Śākya disciple and one of the cousins of the Master, had also organized and developed divine eye extensively long before his attainment of the knowledge of liberation, as can be inferred from his talk with Sāriputta that, in spite of his development of divine eye, he (Anuruddha) had not realized the state of liberation (Aṅguttara III. 13.8 Sutta).

Consequently the Master must have discovered a specific method of organizing and developing divine eye and divine ear differently from the method attainable through the state of liberation mentioned above. We cannot even imagine that an attendant monk of the calibre of Sunakkhatta felt resentment, left the order, and denounced the Master in the assembly of Licchavis in Vesāli for nothing. He must have known that the

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specific device for organizing divine ear existed, as it did for organizing divine eye. The reason of the Master's refusal to teach him the device was evidently unknown to him. So he unjustly ascribed the refusal to envy and jealousy, while the Master correctly assigned his denouncement to anger.

Monastic and Commentatorial Traditions Differ

Moreover, the Master's long discourse on this topic with Mahāli in the said Mahāli sutta shows that the description of organizing divine ear and divine eye is truncated and the preliminary process thereof is wanting in the sutta. What might have been recorded and left unexpunged in the old commentaries was probably not included in the Pāli version by Buddhaghosa. The purpose of doing so is a matter of conjecture for us. What we actually find in the Pāli version of the old commentaries appears to be a faithful presentation of the tradition of the original matter of these old commentaries. At the end of each of the four commentaries of the first four Nikāyas and in the preface to the *Visuddhi-magga* (Pāli text) edited by Dharmānanda Kosambi (1940), we find the identical line in verse meaning:

"It is this (commentary) that is finished giving the substance (sāra) of the (old) Mahā-aṭṭhakathā (the Great commentary)." So it is clear that Buddhaghosa gives us the tradition of the Great commentary in explaining the text of the first four Nikāyas. Similarly, in the introduction of the commentary we find the identical expression in verse meaning in substance:

> The Aṭṭhakathā (commentary) was, in the beginning, compiled by the five hundred liberated ones (members of the First Council) for the purpose of clarifying the meaning of the scripture described by the Buddha and his true followers. This commentary was brought to the island of Sīhala (Ceylon) by the liberated Mahā-Mahinda. This (commentary so brought over there) was kept (rendered) in the language of Sīhala for the use of the inhabitants of the island. Turning that into the textual (tanti, Pāli) language, I shall express the doctrine (vinicchaya) after the tradition (samaya) of the dwellers of the Mahāvihāra (the Great Monastery in Ceylon)

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Further it is said: "*Visuddhi-magga* in the middle of these four scriptures (āgamas) will express the real purport. And taking that (work) also, the meaning of the text should be understood." From the Nigamana (epilogue) verse of the *Visuddhi-magga* also we learn that Buddhaghosa is following the doctrine and tradition of the Great Monastery. We might therefore think that the topic of iddhi was not given its proper treatment in the commentary we have at present, nor in the *Visuddhi-magga* we are to expect the specific device of 'divine ear and eye' alluded to in connection with the episode of Sunakkhatta's desertion. So the device suggested by him in his work is virtually a course of lessons to be learnt only after the mastery over all the stages of samādhi and kasiṇas. This cannot be the specific device discovered by the Master.

For one who has mastered all these stages of meditation and trance will scarcely seek to learn any device away from meditation and trance. Why will he try to perform iddhi, when he can sit in samādhi as long as he likes? Buddhaghosa, has (however) a definite purpose in doing so. His principal purpose must have been to prevent the novice from diverting his attention to the acquirement of iddhi, instead of virtue and insight. So our savant stipulates that the merited background and/or the mastery over trances and kasiṇas are prerequisite to a successful enterprise in iddhi. We have already seen above that this precondition put by him is scarcely borne out by practical instances of monks and nuns possessed of iddhi. But he had to conform to the monastic tradition faithfully and could not have gone out of the customary way of dealing with iddhi.

The existence of a specific method for divine ear other than what Buddhaghosa says is indirectly proved by his silence about an appropriate kasiṇa in this practice. Even the gross sounds he mentions in this connection must clearly point to a method other than his customary one. If we suppose that the original device of organizing it had disappeared by then and he had to invent one to all the gap in the *Vissuddhi-magga*, we shall still have doubts. For he is systematic in commenting on the relative text: "So evam samāhite citte....." meaning 'thus he (the practising monk) in a collected mind.....' The commentator takes this introductory paragraph (Sāmañña phala sutta of Digha-nikāya,

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and) also quoted in this 12th and 13th chapters of the *Visuddhi-magga*, and comments thereupon:

> It (the paragraph) shows that the monk is (by then) one who has mastery over the eight absorptions (sāmapattis or trances, excluding the ninth one, the cessation of consciousness and feeling) through fourteen ways. The rest is to be understood herein as described in the *Visuddhi-magga*. (Sumaṅgala-vilāsini).

These fourteen ways are explained in the beginning of the 12th chapter of his work. By combining the kasiṇas and the trances in different orders, these fourteen ways are made. Ostensibly this ramification of kasiṇas and trances appears to have been introduced in the beginning of the topic of super-normal powers to frighten the novice away from their practice. The clergy must have seen the danger of such powers in the possession of non-arhats. So the members of the Saṅgha must have expunged the specific devices from the commentaries and left the general ones only. It is doubtful whether or not Buddha-ghosa himself had an access to the specific devices. The yogic practices cannot be extinct or disappear so long as a single yogin is in existence. For the Buddha discovered and taught them to his disciples. If Buddhaghosa, knowingly or unknowingly, means to frighten us with his fourteen formidable ways, he will be scarcely successful, inasmuch as these ways could have been rarely mastered by most of the clergy or the laity then, by any-one of them since then.

It is also strange that the commentary rarely mentions a member of the laity practising these powers. It is against human nature, even against that of the Buddhist laity, that the listener to these powers, so frequently mentioned in the then regular preachings, should have been left untouched by them. The instance of the Licchavi scion has been already discussed above. He says to another Licchavi, Mahāli, that he accepted and followed Buddhism for divine eye and left it when he failed to obtaining an instruction for divine ear.

Accordingly, the formula of worship or adoration to the Buddha so assiduously introduced in the first chapter of this fifth

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right ear, to the inner (internal) sound mindfully." If so, the deaf, later handicapped, might practise the nāda. At any rate, the practice of supernormal or subtle sound is widespread in yogic literature. And Buddhaghosa is apparently too stringent when he demands from a novice mastery over trances before organizing divine ear. So we are to start this divine ear practice from the perception of sound, gross or subtle, outer or inner, external or internal.

Based on our physical organ of hearing, perception of sound gradually loses its physical aspect and the material conception of sound begins to disappear. This frame of mind is a precursor to the first form trance. And the divine ear or hearing, or the perception of divine sound, is to manifest itself as soon as the form trance appears. When the form trance appears, it is no longer in the desire (kāmadhātu) or material plane. The perception of sound then assumes a mental and thereafter meditative form. The meditative form is distinguished, from the previous physical or mental form, by its effortless appearance. No effort for maintaining the sound through imitating it will be required; the sound, its perception, or its unique conception, will appear in the state of samādhi, as if the sound is part and parcel of samādhi.

The attention to the sound is given only in the beginning. When the perception of sound is clearly felt, it is kept in mind. The analogy to the Kasiṇa practice may be utilized in this practice also. The gazing at the Kasiṇa is to be likened to the hearing of the sound-sign herein. The visual sign of the Kasiṇa is naturally smoother and quieter than the audible sign of sound in this case. The noise inherent in sound is however an impediment to samādhi and will have therefore to be tolerated by practice.

The device through inference cannot run farther than this. The next step left to us would be to derive something from the instances of divine hearing. From these instances we can easily derive several important things. Firstly, the divine ear is not dependent on the physical laws of sound for its grasping. For instance, the Master is said to have heard, through divine ear-element (dibbāya sota-dhātuyā), the talk (about him) between Bhāradvāja Brāhmaṇa and Māgaṇḍiya wanderer. This was not

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an incident, of over-hearing the talk. The distance of the two places, where the Master was passing the midday in meditation and where the talk was held, was far enough, or too far away for any overhearing. When the Master alluded to this talk later on, Bhāradvāja Brahmaṇa was astounded at the Master's capacity of hearing (Māgaṇḍiya sutta, the 25th of Part II. *Majjhima.*)

The above incident, however, is inconsistently explained in the relative commentary. The commentary says: "The Master having increased the (meditative) light (and directed it to the place) saw, through divine eye, Māgaṇḍiya come there (the fireplace of Bhāradvāja) and also heard, through divine ear, the (word, talk) of the two men talking." When the Master alluded to the talk, Bhāradvāja thought: "Neither was Samaṇa Gotama (the Master) informed (of this talk) by Māgaṇḍiya, nor by me. Leaving us two there is no other third (person) also. Our sound (word) must have been heard through sharp ear (ears) by (this) person (purisa)." The mention of 'sharp ear' (tikhiṇa sota) is inconsistent with the Brāhmaṇa's awesome astonishment (samvigga) at this allusion.

Another instance, among others, is the talk between Sandhāna householder (a Buddhist layman) and Nigrodha wanderer that was similarly heard by the Master. The distance between the two places was obviously too much for the talk to be overheard. This discourse, 'Udumbarika sutta', (the 2nd of Part III, *Dīgha*), is remarkably clear. Towards the end of this discourse, the Master was so disgusted with the stupidity of the assembly of wanderers headed by Nigrodha, that "the Master rose up above in the air (vehāsam) and alighted on the Vulture's Peak; while Sandhāna householder entered (the city of) Rājagaha." The supernormal element is doubly present in this instance.

From these instances it is clearly seen that the divine ear or hearing is the supernormal power of hearing and not a type of physical development with regard to organic keenness. The aforementioned Mahāli sutta can be again referred to in this context. The Master's explanation of divine sight and hearing points to the principle of samādhi being fundamental to these two powers. The hearing attitude and disposition of a novice would be prerequisite to this practice. The practice of hearing the sound, outer or inner, inhibits mental speech and thereby the sign of

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phase must be our guide in discovering this specific device obviously hidden in the commentatorial literature and untraceable in the work of Buddhaghosa and Upatissa. Even the *Yoga-sūtra* and its commentary and sub-commentaries have failed to give us any practically specific device, as we have already seen in this chapter. The glimpse of nāda, or inner sound with its practice mentioned in the later portion of the fourth part of the *Haṭhayoga-pradīpikā* has been given in connection with the Bodhisattva's one-time practice in the section, "Buddha's Method....." above. Although the 83rd and 84th ślokas (stanzas) say that the practice of listening to the inner sound (nāda) covers the outer sound (as well) and thereby subtler sounds are heard, the practice is primarily meant for the attainment of particular absorption termed 'Laya' and not for divine hearing. In the next section we shall describe the device inferred from the text and the commentary.

Inferential Device of Divine Ear

As a general rule a device of yogic importance can scarcely be inferred from any work, if the device be not expressly mentioned in that work. Why should we then try to get the device through inference? The reason is the belief that specific devices were once current among yogins as is evident from our discussions above. Let us then see whether or not our inference would lead us aright. The instances of subtle hearing by the disciples of the Master are comparatively fewer than those of supernormal sight or seeing in the suttas. Hence we may infer that the device of subtle hearing must be more difficult than that of seeing. The instance of Sunakkhatta is before us, he could see supernormal and heavenly phenomena, but failed in or was regarded as unfit for the organization of divine ear.

The Licchavi scion could not have been so dull of intelligence as to mistake the Master's intention in withholding the instruction for producing the divine ear from him. The Master knew that he was angry with him (the Master). Hence the device was not given to him as an instruction by the Master. The specific device was surely not the general type of discourse as preached to Mahāli in explanation of Sunakkhatta's not being able to hear the divine sound. Or, against the definite opinion

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of the relative commentary that the Master did not teach him the device, should we take up the textual words as they stand? The implication would be something like this: 'The Master taught him both the devices; he could see, but could not hear the divine sound.' If so, why should the commentator try to invent story to protect the prestige of the Master's infallible instruction, while there are instances against it? The tradition is to blame. And the commentary has to maintain it.

Hence we must never place the commentary before or in preference to the original text. The commentary is, after all, subservient to the tradition and particular doctrine of the conservative clergy. The text might be still in an original recension and not yet polluted with commentatorial matters. Nevertheless, we cannot make satisfactory progress in the Buddhistic lore without consulting the commentary. This difference existing between the original text and the current Pāli commentary reaches its climax at the point when we feel the goal never and the commentary pushes us far behind. The organization of iddhi or supernormal power and branches of knowledge is just the point where the difference between the text and the commentary reaches its climax. If we are bent upon getting something practically substantial, the commentary would not let us have it from the text so easily.

Now to resume our topic, Upatissa says: "If one loses physical hearing, one also loses divine hearing." Buddhaghosa does not say so, nor does the text do so. But the preliminary practice mentioned by our savant and the simile given in the text imply that Upatissa is right in his definite statement. We may logically infer that the organization of divine ear is primarily based on our hearing capacity. We must therefore start from our perception of sound. This attitude is also voiced in the 41st sūtra of the third part of the *Yogasūtra* and its commentary discussed in the sections, "Yogasūtra and its continuation" in this very chapter above. The sūtra means in substance that the divine ear is produced 'by concentrating on the relation of the ear and the space'.

The 'nāda' topic of the *Haṭhayoga-Pradīpikā* is concerned with the practice of listening to the inner or internal sound. The topic in the 67th śloka, says: "Let one listen, through the

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sound becomes clearer, bolder, and more profound. Both these wanderers, Māgaṇḍiya and Nigrodha, had expressed opinions unfavourably to the prestige of the Master, but they had attracted the attention of the Master for particular reasons. Hence the overhearing of their talk by the Master was a piece of meditative experience rather than that of keen hearing.

From the above example we may make our inferential device more precise by directing our effort towards meditative perception of sound, irrespective of its intervening distance. The above commentary on the Māgaṇḍiya sutta has given us a clue to it by explaining the incident as follows: "The Master having increased the light saw through divine eye Māgaṇḍiya come there and also heard through divine ear the sound of the two men talking." Evidently the Master was not eavesdropping. He directed his divine sight towards the fire-place of Bhāradvāja and saw Māgaṇḍiya come there. By the way he also heard them talk. The physical organ of hearing does not come into this picture. The divine sight must have been already associated with divine ear, as stated and described by the Master himself in the Mahāli sutta above.

In Conclusion

In conclusion I must admit that I have no pretension of hearing anything abnormal. Whatever I thought of hearing as something in meditation or dream might have been simply an aberration of the mind. But these few decades of thinking along this line as described in the above three chapters have fully convinced me of the possibility and utility of this supernormal power of hearing. The specific device of the Master, however, is untraceable in the extant Pāli text and commentary. But the inferential device highlighted in this section promises to be a near approach to the missing device we are in search of. The relevant *Yoga-sūtra* and its commentary and sub-commentaries approximate to this approach. The application of the relevant stanzas of the *Haṭha-yoga-Pradīpikā* would seem to have a similar approach. We shall presently see, in the next section on the organization of divine eye, that the twin device of organizing divine eye and divine ear is not fundamentally different from each other, as can be logically inferred from the Mahāli sutta also.

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Organization of Divine Eye

The organization of divine eye in a limited sense would appear to the reader, to be comparatively easier or at least more understandable than that of divine ear. The field of divine eye is very wide in the Buddha's system covering the areas from simple clairvoyance to heavenly vision and visions of persons played over by their own destiny. The phenomena, or at least the ideology, of divine eye are so widespread in Buddhism that it would be scarcely possible to conceive it without the divine eye complex. The Buddha is said to have been enlightened, not merely through the intellect but by the meditative light illuminating all his achievements. He is said to have no doubts; for these doubts vanished owing to this light being stabilized throughout his days and nights and life-span:

> That I, verily, Anuruddha! meditating without slackness but with effort and vigour, perceive limited light and see limited forms, and also perceive unlimited light and see unlimited forms even throughout the night, and also throughout the day, and throughout both the night and the day too.

This is what the Buddha said to his three Shākyan disciples, Anuruddha and two others, undergoing meditative discipline in the Eastern Bamboo Forest (Pācina-vamsa-dāya). This is recorded in the Upakkilesa sutta (III.28) of the *Majjhima Nikāya.*

Besides the Master, Anuruddha, the Shākyan cousin of the Master, was well-versed and efficient in divine eye. He has attributed this capacity of his to the intensive practice of the 'Four-Memory Practice' in the Anuruddha samyutta, the 52nd one in the *Samyutta-Nikāya* (V. 52.1-24 suttas). The practice is one of the very important practices taught by the Master. This particular method of meditation has been described and discussed in detail in the second chapter, 'Satipaṭṭhāna', or 'Cultivation of Memory' of the second phase of this research. But the Elder has not explained in any one of these twenty-four suttas how he has turned the said practice into a device of divine eye (dibba cakkhu). Nevertheless he is textually recognised as the most famous organizer of divine eye. The commentary

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on the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* in commenting on this Elder as the foremost of the possessors of divine eye says about his constant practice as follows:

> The Elder (Anuruddha), leaving the interval (time) for taking food and sundries only, is said (that he used) to be meditating for the rest of the time, by observing the beings (suttas, persons) through divine eye, after having increased (keeping on increasing the (meditative) light. By this mastery (over divine eye) this (elder) acquired the name of being the foremost (aggo) among the possessors of divine eye.

This sort of acknowledgement of his practice is exceptionally illuminating herein. The customary remark of Buddhaghosa, in such cases as that of Anuruddha, would have been that the Elder could gain the divine eye to this extent due to his former merit. And the acknowledgement of the constant practice of the Elder in the above commentary, evidently old, signifies that it was this constant practice that made the Elder so perfect in divine eye.

Another remarkable instance is that of Uppalavaṇṇo, the nun, who was the foremost of the possessors of iddhi. The most wonderful story of her former lives is told in the same commentary. She was, to wit, the mother of five hundred pacceka-buddhas, enumerated by the Master himself in the Isigili sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (III. 16 sutta). In the time of our Buddha, she had been born as the daughter of a merchant in Sāvatthi. Owing to her complexion being like the womb (inner part) of a blue lotus (niluppala), she was named Uppalavaññā (Lotus-complexioned). In order to escape the importunate solicitations of distinguished youths for her marriage with them, her father brought her to the Buddhist nunnery and got her initiated and ordained in the Order of Nuns.

Soon after her ordination her turn (tālavāra) came to look after the meeting hall (uposathāgāra). Lighting the lamp and sweeping the meeting hall, she began to grasp the sign in the burning wick, that is, the flame of the lamp (padīpa-sikhāya), while she stood up. While thus standing up and looking (at

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the flame) she produced the jhāna (trance) on the support of the fire (tejo) kasiṇa. Making the same (trance) as the foundation trance (pādaka-jhāna), she attained arhatship.

"Together with the fruit (stabilized state) of arhatship (to be sure), she obtained the mastery over the iddhi of transformation." All these descriptions of this principal nun's attainment of iddhi through arhatship, and that again by gazing at the flame should attract our serious attention. For the practice of gazing at the flame of a burning wick is very old and kept a secret among some female persons in Nepal. These pieces of information are seemingly the remnants of those old practices we are trying to discover in the commentary. This discovery would also help us in understanding the text on these topics clearly. We have already discussed in previous sections 'Prātibha' on "Continuation of Yogasūtra" that the maintenance of the knowledge of liberation is itself a master device for producing most of supernormal powers.

The above commentatorial statement that 'She obtained the mastery over the iddhi of transformation' through the attainment of the fruit of arhatship is a general statement and not an isolated one about this wonderful 'theri' (nun) only. What is really interesting is her practice of gazing at the flame of the burning wick of a lamp. This lamp might have been an old fashioned one without the covering globe of glass, so that the uncovered flame might have been also flickering all the while. This state of flickering light must have been helpful to her in applying it to the inherent Buddhistic law of change with its sequence of suffering.

Apart from this higher utility of the tejo-kasiṇa (fire-disc), this fire-element (tejo-dhātu) has been extensively used in fire-kasiṇa by Buddhaghosa and already described in the 11th chapter of the third phase of this research. Buddhaghosa says, in the 13th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, when dealing with this divine eye:

> The beginner, who desires to see (through divine eye, the divine vision) should do so: 'After making the foundation trance (that is) conducive to supernormal knowledge (to be arisen) on the support of kasiṇa, capable of being directed

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(to his objective) in all respects, he should (take up and) bring one of these three kasiṇas, Tejo (fire) kasiṇa, Odāta (white) kasiṇa, Āloka (light) kasiṇa, near (to bear on his immediate operation.)

This is a pretty complex sentence giving us a condensed picture of what he is going to teach or advise the beginner. The beginner might range from a novice sāmaṇera to the oldest monk. In Buddhism the intellect, practice, and achievement are highly prized and praised in preference to the stupidity, langour, or vanity of anyone, however senior. Hence there is much scope for a promising novice herein.

Further on Buddhaghosa says:

The beginner should bring it (anyone of these three kansiṇas) to the state of an access samādhi (upacāra-jjhāna) and having increased it, stop it there; the purpose (of saying so) is that he should not produce an absorption (appanā) in it. For, if he produces it (absorption), it becomes the support for a foundation trance and not that for a preliminary work (to divine eye). What he means to say is this:

Bring this kasiṇa practice for divine eye to pre-samādhic state only; do not let yourself be absorbed into a deep samādhi, but just remain on its threshold; if you be absorbed into it, you would reach the basic jhāna and not be preparing for divine eye.

The point is logically tenable; it may happen so; but our savant is unnecessarily emphasizing a point beyond the sphere of any practiser. The Master has not put this sort of limit to the practice. Even the *Yogasūtra* has not spoken anything about this sort of exception to 'samyama'; this trio of yogic desiderata, dhāraṇā (maintenance of attention), dhyāna (contemplation), and samādhi (absorption), is imperative in every item of supernormal power.

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Continuation of Divine Eye

The field of divine eye appears to be very wide. For the iddhima or the possessor of iddhi sees and has to see what he passes over or whatever he meets in this unique pursuit or excursion. Not only the world known to us, but the yogin also is said to pass over regions and to meet things and being extraordinary in spite of himself. This might have been certainly due to the development of extraordinary sight by or in the yogin. The divine ear is also often joined or thought together with the divine eye. It goes without saying that we often wish or even need to hear the words human or divine whom we see or happen to see in these extraordinary sights or visions.

These extraordinary sights or visions might be seen by yogins or practisers of meditation in some particular state of samādhi. But forms and figures might also be seen in such samādhi. If seen, these forms and figures move like those in our dream. When these figures move and behave like human beings in samādhi, we might also wish that these beings speak and even sing audibly to us. As these beings seen in the field of particular trance look fine very often, it is natural that we wish to hear their speech and song thinking that their sound would be as sweet as their form is fine.

The instance of Sunakkhatta, the son of Licchavi, reported in several suttas (*Dīgha* I.6 and III.1; *Majjhima* I.12) is as discussed already in a way informative in the need of this dual aspect of divine senses. The achievement of one power should have facilitated that of the other, but the achievement of this Licchavi in supernormal sight did not enable him to acquire the power of hearing divine speech. When reported of his resentment and inquired of the cause of his inability to hear the divine words (*Dīgha* I.6), the Master explains to Mahāli that there are separate devices to acquire the powers of seeing and hearing such sight and speech. Only those persons who organize both the devices are expected to be able to see and hear them. This instruction is very clear and points to some particular samādhi not given in the sutta. There is no mention of any kasiṇa whatsoever for the organization of these powers. A similar or identical device for both these divine perceptions is,

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to all appearances, what the Master has instructed in this sutta.

The kasiṇa practice for divine eye so enthusiastically advocated in the commentaries and the *Visuddhi-magga* is entirely absent in this sutta, nor can we find the practice mentioned in connection with this power anywhere in the relevant suttas of the first four Nikāyas. But Buddhaghosa appears to be quite at home in kasiṇa practices. However apparently simple, the kasiṇa practice is highly spoken of and must have been secretly performed by and widely prevalent in the clergy of the times when the commentaries were compiled. The secrecy of these practices can be imagined or even inferred from the absence of their mention in the commentary and sub-commentaries of the *Yogasūtra*.

For, if the kasiṇa practice had been known to the *Yogasūtra* and its proponents, we might have had it mentioned among the seven devices of concentration (eka-tattva-abhyāsa). These devices are practised for the stoppage of nine particular and four general impediments to the highest state of samādhi. The relevant sūtras are given therein from the 30th to 39th sūtras of the First Part. Neither do we find the kasiṇa device in the Third Part of the *Yogasūtra*. By the way, the treatment of these powers in the Pāli *Tipiṭaka* and the commentaries is much more detailed than what we find about them in the *Yogasūtra* and its commentatorial literature.

The treatment of the supernormal power and knowledge in the Pāli text and commentary can also be enlarged with appropriate instances found in Pāli literature. The instances help us in several ways: Firstly, a definite instance shows that the relative device is not only theoretical, but based on practical ground. Secondly, it provides us with some means of evaluating the device as regards its practicability. Thirdly, it enhances the possibility of our organizing and accomplishing the device. Fourthly, it becomes a source of encouragement, whenever we begin to lose our confidence in this unique branch of knowledge.

Moreover, the organization of divine eye is not an isolated facet of the supernormal phenomenon. It is needed and found generally in almost all the 'iddhi-vidha and abhiññā' or supernormal power and knowledge. Evidently this knowledge covers

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a wide field. Hence we shall have to limit this treatment to its development only, pari passu with that of divine ear, so far as the scope of this phase is concerned.

Buddhaghosa's Method of Divine Eye

Buddhaghosa has followed the textual sequence in his treatment of supernormal power and knowledge in the *Visuddhi-magga*. So he has treated of the 'iddhi-vida' in the 12th chapter of his work, while he deals with the 'abhiññā' in the 13th chapter. The term 'iddhi viddha' denotes almost all the difficult powers of supernormal phenomena. It is strange that the most difficult should come first both in the relative text and his work. This, however, should not discourage us; for the text does not stipulate the sequence in these powers and branches of knowledge; instances in the text show that they do not strictly conform to the stated sequence.

Abhiññā is technically equivalent to supernormal knowledge. This knowledge is generally spoken of as consisting of five or six types. In such a count as this, the above-mentioned iddhi-vidha is also included herein. The last of these types is the supra-mundane knowledge of liberation. So the two out of these types are those of divine ear (dibba-sota-dhātu) and divine eye (dibba-chakkhu). These two devices might appear to be comparatively easy to organize. The divine eye is to be organized through any one of the three kasiṇas, viz. tejo (fire), odāta (white), and āloka (light) kasiṇas. The chosen, selected, or practised kasiṇa is to be brought near the mental focus; the mind is, at the same time, made to approach the foundation trance (jhāna). Mental concentration is to be brought only to the threshold of trance, and not to deep trance itself; dwelling in this access jhāna, the beginner should increase this kasiṇa and stop there and try not to immerse into a profound samādhi. Out of these three kasiṇas the light (daylight) kasiṇa is said to be the best.

He further says:

The form (rūpagata) should be seen (looked at, observed) within the increased place (space) only. While seeing the form, the preliminary (parikamma) turn (consisting) of

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kasina passes off. Thereby the (meditative) light vanishes. The light having vanished, the form also vanishes out of sight. So the beginner should enter the foundation (fourth) trance again and again, and rising therefrom, the (meditative) light should be spread out. Thus gradually the light becomes firm. 'Let the light be here' (with this desire or resolve), whatever place (area, space) is limited (delimited) the light stays all over there. Even if the yogin sit there the whole day watching (looking at the form) the form is seen."

The most important piece of definition regarding divine eye is when he says:

Therein when the forms of objects invisible to the physical eye of that (practising) monk, such as those lying within the belly, resting in the heart-organ, buried beneath the earth, lying beyond a wall and a mountain and an enclosure, and even lying in another world, come to the path (āpātha) of the eye of knowledge, and these forms become seen as if by the physical eye, then it is to be understood that the divine eye is produced. And only that (eye of knowledge) is here capable of seeing the form (these ordinarily invisible forms), and not the states of mind (arisen and set) prior to this (Ñā a cakkhu, knowledge-eye). He however, warns:

This, however, becomes an impediment to a non-liberated (puthujjāna) person—the person might be deranged (owing to or out of jhāna) . . . through fear . . . Hence the beginner should not be careless in the witnessing of (these) forms.

Moreover, he is methodical in assigning only final, fourth or fifth javana or mental moment to the form (rūpāvacara) category, while the rest of mental moments belong to desire, or physical or material category. This is as much as to say that the divine eye belongs to the form plane.

Upatissa's Method of Divine Sight

In the ninth chapter of the *Vimutti-magga* the topic of 'divine sight' is dealt with in four pages (224-227). The elder has

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seemingly drawn much of his matter from the suttas rather than from the old commentaries for this topic. Substantially he says: "He who enters the fourth meditation, jhāna, on the light kasiṇa and acquires facility therein and by him who is in possession of natural sight," practises and obtains divine sight or divine eye. Then further on he says:

> The new yogin being pure and immovable, enters the light kasiṇa. Attaining to the fourth meditation, jhāna, he attends to and resolves upon the perception of light and the perception of day thus: 'This day is like night; this night is like day . . .' he is able to strengthen his mind and increase light.

From the above passage, it is clear that he is telling us the same things, in substance, which Buddhaghosa has told minutely and in detail. He mentions the four bases of supernormal power [cattāro iddhi-pāda in Pāli—the researcher], without explaining and applying them to the organization of divine eye. Moreover, the eleven defilements mentioned by him subsequently without referring to the definite source are not appropriately applied to the topic under discussion. These defilements, however, are four in the Upakkilesa sutta mentionned in the section, "Organization of Divine Eye" above. The allusion to 'day and night' in the above passage appears to be to the four samādhibhāvanā of the Saṇgīti sutta (III. 10) of the *Dīgha-nikāya*. The appropriate meaning, however, is apparent in the above-mentioned section of this chapter.

The section on "Miscellaneous Teachings" (p. 228), unlike those in the *Visuddhi-magga*, reproduced the gist of the Mahāli sutta without referring to the source as follows :

> Here there are the following miscellaneous teachings : If one practises one kind of concentration with the purpose of seeing forms through divine sight, he can only see forms. He cannot hear sounds. If he practises one kind of concentration for the purpose of seeing and hearing, he can see and hear....." This is a faithful reproduction of what was said in the above **sutta.**

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Conclusion of Development of Supernormal Senses and Manifestation

So far we have followed step by step the miscellaneous grounds for organizing divine ear or hearing and divine eye or seeing. These two divine senses connote what encompasses everything super-normal in denotation. Those two phenomena are essential wherever the yogin happens to be in his excursion; therein the organization of divine ear or hearing is, however, more difficult than that of divine eye or seeing; so we have left nothing unexplored for this power in this phase of research. Moreover, the power of divine hearing has many potentialities of practical utility even at present. For example, the information of coming events might be obtained by its proper development. And the language is no bar to yogic understanding of spiritual information.

Moreover, the power of divine hearing is mentally yogic; wherever the yogic mind reaches, the divine hearing may be operating. In a word, the physical sound even faintly heard from a distance may guide the mind to reach the spot. A lot of significance lies hidden in a phenomenon of sound gross or subtle, human or divine, material or spiritual. Mental speech or speaking is, of course, a great impediment to samādhi, whereas the concentrated hearing attitude inhibits mental speech and prepares the mind to settle down the mental deep or substratum. Other feats of yogic power may quickly disclose the personality of the yogin with the complication of this disclosure; whereas these two powers cannot do so, unless and until the yogin himself thinks to do otherwise.

'In the basic type of meditation wherein our mind becomes calm and quiet, speech vocal or mental is regarded as a great impediment. It is why we are not recommended to repeat any mantra (spell) in such meditation. The practice of divine or yogic hearing might give us some impression of doubt as to 'How is it that we try to hear sound, which is said to be an impediment to samādhi ?' In such practice we are taught to keep the hearing attitude alert, not to let our mind think over the meaning of spoken word or voice. The concentrated attitude of mind is a factor of samādhi; hence this sort of practice quickly stops our mind from wavering over diverse objects

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through mental speech; moreover this concentration gradually deepens mind. This mental depth may be taken for a substratum of meditative field. It is further to be marked that these two yogic powers even when fully developed protect their possessor from disclosure and its complicating consequence.'

The power of divine eye or seeing appears to be comparatively easy to organize and even to develop. This is also immensely favourable to samādhi. Moreover the meditative light, the key to divine sight or seeing, is so generally experienced in meditation that it will scarcely let anyone remain for long a sceptic of the yogic phenomenon and its appearance. The proper attitude at its appearance is to take it as it is, without any deliberation over it at the moment. So one should do, when any shape or form appears in a state of meditation. Any deliberation about such phenomena as these at the moment would certainly hide them away. Yogic experience is generally a matter of faith, while the experience lasts. After the latter is gone, passed away, or disappeared, the deliberation may take place as an after-thought, which is regarded as a help for keeping it in vivid remembrance. No one should, however, denounce one's own yogic experience, as it stands, even if distorted.

Especially for the purpose of these two powers, we have discussed, in the first chapter of this phase of research, over the formula of worship or adoration to the Buddha. For, we have to believe that, when we do not know the specific device of organizing and developing these powers, the remembrance of the Buddha in the traditionally accepted form would or might help us, or at least maintain our zeal in such an enterprise as this. In the latter half of this very first chapter, we brought the viewpoint of the *Yogasūtra* on the devotion to God to bear on the subject, even though the conception of an immutable, eternal, and omniscient divine principle is foreign to the Buddha's system of thinking.

In the second chapter, we have investigated the device on respiration further in the context of these powers. This third chapter has left no devices unexplored in this particular field of supernormal power. There is no reason therefore why somebody more fortunate and less hampered than many of us

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including humble self should not be successful in this enterprise; in which a considerable number of the Master's disciples, both monks and nuns, sāmaṇeras and sāmaṇeris, laymen and laywomen, are recorded to have succeeded. A close study of these instances may disclose to other researchers, current or future, other factors pertinent to the device, but not noticed here; and these may guide the practisers further. Moreover, the continuance of this research in the succeeding phases on the still graver and higher subjects of the "Buddha's System of Meditation" might disclose short-cuts to these powers unexpectedly. This fifth phase is now coming to a conclusion of what my poor self could describe herein and to an expectation of what some of its readers would produce in the practical field.

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Nigamana

Closing Reflection

THE CUSTOMARY reflection of the author expressed at the close of his endeavour is indicative of his relief at his accomplishment. And at the same time the author tries to show that he has fulfilled what he had stated to accomplish in the beginning of his work. Therefter he mentions a brief story of how he started the work. His satisfaction at such a completion can be seen from the closing wish he expresses. In a way I have also followed the same custom and expressed or implied it in my previous Nigamanas.

The tradition of auspicious beginning traced at the start of this phase was really a solicitation, by this humble author, of help from the spiritual source for the exposition of the subject which is so often neglected, ingnored, or even scoffed at. If a spontaneous utterance of the said formula can assume such a form of universal acceptance, the humble exposition of mine as regards the harmless spiritual power through subtle. Seeing and Hearing in this phase may also follow suit and may not fail to arouse a sort of interest for their organization among the members of our society and the coming generations.

The brief story of this project has been already told in the First Phase and followed up and mentioned in the successive ones. The patronage of His Majesty King Birendra Bir

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Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal, has been an immediate cause of this project being set on motion. And I beg to express it without reserve.

I have to remind the reader that this phase has dealt, as best as possible, with some information about the supernormal Seeing and Hearing, the achievement of which has been so naturally and commonly declared in the verses of the anthology ascribed to the enlightened monks and nuns of the order. The Master discovered ways to organize and stabilize these powers. He taught them to his disciples. From their declarations we see that many or at least some of the disciples obtained these unique powers to their satisfaction.

All of these arhantas have passed away into Nibbāna leaving us the Dhammas; the ways to these powers are also included in them. Let us not devaluate what we are. No one knows one's value and capacity till one realizes them. The Master has left us the exhortation to work out our own destiny by ourselves. No better wish can be desired than this for us all.

In pursuance of the customary expressions of wish and satisfaction at the conclusion of their labours uttered by Pāli and Sanskrit savants, I have also written this humble Nigamana. I have no pretensions worth presentation other than my incompetence. The little I have done in this field so far might be attributable to the same perennial source, from which our savants have accomplished works of wonderful excellence; if my endeavours were not guided by this faith, I could not have ventured even a little distance in the very first Phase, not to speak of so much farther as the current Phase.

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IN ADDITION to the Bibliography given in the previous phases of this research, the following works have been consulted:

List of Books

1. *Visuddhi-magga* of Buddhaghosa, in Sinhalese script, Simon Hevavitarne Bequest, Ceylon (1919).
2. Aṭṭhasālini, the commentary on the Dhamma-Saṅgani, the First Book of the *Abhidhamma*, in Sinhalese script (Ceylon, 1916).

Note : The above two books in Devanāgari script are also with me. But at some doubtful places, we have to consult other books also. We should not rest satisfield with the editor's assurance only. For the doubtful term should be clarified as far as possible.

For instance, the *Sumaṅgala Vilāsini*, the commentary on the *Dīgha-nikāya* in the introductory part mentions the name of "Dhamma-Saṇgaha" instead of the regular name of "Dhamma-Saṇga i". This is very strange indeed. The name of the first book of the *Abhiddhamma* should not have differed thus in this commentary. The commentary on the Vinaya (the Verañja-kaṇḍa-vaṇṇanā) mentions Dhamma-Saṇgaha-a hakathā" as the

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Aṭṭhasālini;" the latter itself has done so at the end of its chapters.

Were the names of the books of Abhidhamma fluid as late as the compilation of these commentaries ? The words "Sangaha" and "Saṅgaṇi" are of course equivalent and mean 'collection', while the latter term looks more specific.

3. The Buddhacarita : Part I. Sankrit Text edited by E.H. Johnston, D.Litt. published for the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Calcutta Baptist Mission Press (1935). The Preface to this work written by E.H. Johnston himself is full of informations about this poetic work.
4. The translated versions of the Pāli Text are as follows:

"*Majjhima-nikāya*", translated into Hindi by Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana, Published by Mahābodhi Society, Sārnāth (Benares), Ist edition (1933).

"*Vinaya-Piṭaka*", translated into Hindi by Rahula Sāṅkrityāyana, published by Mahābodhi Society Sārnāth, Ist Edition (1935).

"*Digha-nikāya*", translated into Hindi by Jagadīśa Kāśyapa, Published by Mahābodhi Society, Sārnāth, Ist edition (1936).

"*Dhammapadam*"', translated into Sanskrit and Hindi by Rāhula Sāṇkrityāyana, published by Mahābodhi-Sabhā, Sārnāth, Ist edition (1933).

Some Thoughts on Textual Study

THE PALI TIPITAKA books are as these were entered in the previous Bibliographies. These can neither increase nor decrease. The study and research of them are of course open to more and more intensive and critical study. For the conduction of the individual phases of this research, I found it always a short-cut to revise the *Tipiṭaka* books rather than have a sort of dependence on their notes.

Whenever a reference is needed, it is better to consult the original than to depend on its remembrance or notes. The text on revision becomes often self-explanatory and enlightening. The habit of constantly consulting the relative commentary

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makes one totally subservient to the commentatorial tradition and thereby deprives one of one's initiative and instinct. By the way, the true realization of Dhamma, when occurred to a disciple, is said to have also entailed the four kinds of comprehension termed Pāti-sambhidā. We cannot have this sort of pretension at present, but a frequent revision of the text should not be undervalued even now.

The first two Nikāyas *Dīgha* and *Majjhima*, are worth intensive study; the third Nikāya, *Samyutta* indirectly appears, in a number of suttas, to be referable to the first two Nikāyas; so is the fourth, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. The fifth or last Nikāya includes many books; only a few out of these should be selected for study at a time.

The *Vinaya Piṭaka* contains a number of important suttas. The occasion and circumstance of the promulgation of rules are very interesting. These give us the inside picture of the Order of monks and nuns, which was conducted in secrecy.

The *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* is virtually an all-inclusive classification of dhammas contained in the Nikāyas. This is a sort of reference work, not actually a work on philosophy as we understand this term. The fifth book of this Piṭaka, *Kathāvatthu*, is of course very interesting and should be revised off and on. The last two books, Yamaka and Paṭṭhāna are vere difficult of comprehension, but they are not without their utility.

Commentatorial literature is vast. One book at least should be studied, preferably the commentary on the *Majjhima*. The *Visuddhi-magga* is of course inseparable from any book of this literature. It is in the commentatorial literature that we meet with dogmatic expressions, discussions, and verses. Wherever we find these intricate problems, we should turn over to the text for a right attitude.

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The Buddha's System of Meditation

PHASE VI

ON SUPERNORMAL MIND-TO-MIND KNOWLEDGE AND SUPERNORMAL REMEMBRANCE OF ONE'S OWN PAST LIFE

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I

Introduction

Buddhist Conception of Mind

THE MIND is conceived in Buddhism as something conscious but never stationary. It rises, stays, and sets from moment to moment. It is never at rest. Even in the state of dreamless sleep the unconscious mind is supposed to exhibit the similar character of rising, staying, and setting from moment to moment. It cannot, of course, be observed in this state. It is neither active, nor functional, nor morally good or bad; it is merely the result of one's own former birth-generating action; from the next moment of one's own germination the flow of this characteristically unconscious mind runs on throughout one's life-span unless and until it is disturbed. It is disturbed by what is known as the cognitive process in our life. This unconscious state of mind is termed the *bhavaṅga*, or a constituent of life. Between the moments of our conscious life also we invariably fall or lapse into this unconscious state of *bhavaṅga*.

We have, however, no term such as *bhavaṅga* in the next sutta, Vinaya, or *Abhidhamma;* neither have we a theory connected with it. However, this term and its theory are to be found in the commentaries and the *Visuddhi-magga*. Although their might have been this mind in the original, the translated version of the *Vimutti-magga*, however, does not contain this significant word, nor an import thereof. On the topic of dream in the

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fourth part of the *Milinda-Pāñha*, Nāgasena uses the term 'bhavaṅga'; but the few sentences he uses show that he does not strictly conform to the commentatorial conception or theory about bhavaṅga. Evidently the theory about bhavaṅga appears to be a later development. At any rate, the mind is regarded as momentary whether it be awake, in cognitive process, in meditation, in a profound trance, in dream, or in dreamless sleep. Philosophically the momentary mind may be subject to great controversy; but meditatively such a mind as this is very convenient for and amenable to easy handling in meditation and its potentialities.

The physical base of mind is said in the *Abhidhamma* and its commentary to be the heart, and not the brain. The mind itself is, however, psychic and not physical. The phenomenon of consciousness is taken to be the mind arising with its concomitants. Whether the consciousness should arise in any of the sensible objects through any sense-organs or in the mental percept or concept, the consciousness is said to be the mind. Obviously, the mind is a much wider term in Buddhism than in other Oriental systems; the denotation of the mind covers almost all the immaterial elements and phenomena wherever and whenever consciousness appears in them. Thus the perception through the five sense-organs comes within the denotation of the mind, inasmuch as it is consciousness through the sense. This sense-perception or sense-consciousness is however morally neutral; it cannot generate by itself any result good or bad in the future; for it is itself a result and not regarded as an active principle.

The active principle of the mind morally considered is divided into many categories. These are again variously divided, sub-divided, and classified. It is to be noted that the morally bad or evil mind is contained within three categories only, viz., rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion. These evil minds are said by principle not to be found in any of the meditative minds, contemplative, form, formless, or supramundane; and they are also by implication not to be found in any of the supernormal powers and branches of supernormal knowledge; hence we may be fully assured that Buddhist yoga and its potentialities are inherently incapable of being used for malpractice. Thus the

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supernormal power and knowledge in Buddhism are regarded as a natural sequence to the more serious organizations for trance and absorptions. These powers and knowledges are consequently never practised separately away from trance and contemplation.

Moral Ground for Organizing these Powers

Buddhism, particularly the Buddha's system, is principally based on moral conduct. If it swerve from this moral path, its followers especially in the more supramundane field would certainly land themselves into catastrophes. For they have to practise even while walking soul-lessness; this practice would entail the act of walking without the walker as an entity or a personified soul. What he has to do will be to cultivate a habit of automatic walking with circumspection towards morality and law of the country. Hence we find so much praise as appreciation of the behaviour particularly the walking of the monks in the suttas. We never find in the suttas that the monk or monks ever ran along the road.

The least indication of malpractice of these powers by any careless monk produced an immediate reaction from the then clergy and resulted in severe reprimand from the Master. Hence the Buddha's system has a moral base from the very beginning. And it is said that, when the bad intention against the Master was conceived by Devadatta, his supernormal power vanished immediately. There are also found several instances in the commentaries, when some Buddhist sāmaṇeras or novices who possessed power of spatial travel fell down to the ground as soon as they were attracted towards youthful women and lost sutble balance in the air. These few examples show that the Buddhist yoga is meant for some serious purposes and not for dissipation. By the way, this state of Buddhist yoga gurantees a spiritual way of life for its devotees and precludes any malpractice from them.

The supernormal power of mind-to-mind knowledge was never misused by the members of the clergy or by any of the lay disciples in the Master's time. The Queen of Kosala, Mallikā Devi, happened to have a certain secret; she knew that her secret

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must be already known to monks possessed of mind-to-mind knowledge; she felt ashamed of herself before those monks. She died soon after this; the King of Kosala wanted to know her fate from the Master; the Master kept from putting that question to him for a week; she had then passed the ordeal and regained a better state in heaven; then only the King had his answer from the Master. So even the Master used the unique knowledge with discretion. The full story is given in the "Mallikā-Devi-vatthu" in the commentary of Gāthā No. 151 (11. Jarā-vaggo) of the Dhammapada.

Foundation Trance to this Knowledge

The foundation trance is basic to superenormal knowledge. This necessity naturally secures the purity of supernormal knowledge from its chances of being ever used for evil purposes. The foundation trance is the fourth stage of the form trance, known as rūpāvacara jhāna in Buddhist terminology. The full course of organizing this trance has been already given in the first phase of this research. The first three chapters of the second phase contain Brief Resume, Recapitulation, and Review of this form trance. The practice and device of this trance is so dissimilar to all other practices of meditation that a brief description thereof, even if attempted at its best, will not be clear to any of the intending novices or would-be yogins. Nevertheless, we shall have to do something to help the would-be practisers.

Briefly stated, the preliminary state of this trance is gradually attained, if one meditates naturally without speaking in the mind. One is to resort to a lonely place; one sits down upon the ground; any posture easy and comfortable would be sufficient in the beginning. But the sitting posture of an oriental yogin with folded legs crossed or half-crossed at the thighs should be gradually cultivated and practised. The merit of such a posture as this is the capacity one acquires to sit without moving therefrom for hours together comfortably. In this position the body should also be placed erect, so that the backbone remains straight. A steady posture indirectly helps one to concentrate onwards calm, quiet, and speechless meditation without disturbance.

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In speechless meditation one should be fully conscious, awake, patient, attentive and alert to awareness round one's body, and also dispel any doubt about one's own meditative endeavour. After some time the meditation would assume the preliminary state of a deeper quietude not experienced before state. This is the beginning of something approaching a trance-like. This state eventually terminates in the first jhāna, provided one is patient, alert, silently watchful, and does not rise from one's seat till something that was unrealized before is realized. When the mental speech and concept intervene only off and on, and one becomes aware of such an intervening period, the first trance must have already begun.

These four trances or jhānas of the form category are basic to any meditative achievement in Buddhistic yoga and iddhi or supernormal power. These arise from the first trance spoken of above. They are not merely conceptual; they are real mental states well demarcated from each other or from one another; the first emergence of this jhāna would appear as marvellous and unknown before. This must have been the jhāna which was first discovered by Prince Siddhārtha, while he was meditating under the rose-apple tree (jambu) in Kapilavastu in his motherland. This jhāna was, according to him, the clue to his further achievement later on under the Bodhi tree in Gaya.

Hence one should place the highest hope of one's own in this particular system of meditation, and never depręcate it even in his mind. For a meditative system such as the Buddha's is real and living; this cannot be denounced with impunity even now at present; if one do so, one will never become its participant. The Master is never found to have denounced the meditative achievement of other teachers and religious leaders; no yogin worth the name will ever denounce the yogic realization of another yogin, irrespective of their ideological differences; for, mystically the yogic principle appears to be the same, in spite of verbal differences with regard to stage, state, and system of yoga; so the denouncement of a particular yoga would revert to one's own yoga in some stage, state, or achievement.

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Observation of Mind

The first step to mind-to-mind knowledge should be logically the practice of observing the mind of one's own, as found in cittānupassanā or the observation of mind described in the Sati-paṭṭhāna sutta of the (*Dīgha* II. 9) and *Majjhima* (I. 10) *Nikāyas*. This portion of the sutta has been dealt with in the 10th chapter of the second phase of this research. The general procedure of observing the mind is similar to observing the respiration. This latter portion of the same sutta has also been treated of in the 4th chapter of the second phase. The Ānāpāna-sati or the memory of respiration has a special place in the Buddhistic system of meditation. There is a preliminary as well as an advanced stage of this practice in the system.

Briefly stated, the memory of respiration is an easy means of maintaining the consciousness continuously as long as one can do so. The continuous flow of consciousness can be proved to one's own satisfaction only if one has something to remember in a continuous manner as the breathing in and out. The same thing can be done continuously, if one remembers the bodily feeling in taking breath in and expelling it out in the same continuous way. Really speaking, the voluntary or conscious breathing may be said to be an act of the mind. And if one consciously breathes in and out, the mind is also acting similarly, which is equivalent to saying that the mind is acting consciously all the while.

In feeling the respiration continuously, the mind is still more intimately engaged in being conscious of each act o f respiration. According to Buddhistic psychology, each moment of consciousness is invariably accompanied with feeling, amon g other concomitants; for mind or consciousness never arises a lone. This is one of the great and important contributions of Buddhism to modern psychology in general and yogic system i n particular. If one maintains the remembrance of feeling, one may be sure that the mind or consciousness of one's own has b een continuously present all the while.

The Buddhistic theory of momentary mind w[i]ll sple ndidly fit in this situation. The theory would say that the m cmentary flow of mind or consciousness is the pure and simp le conscious life of the yogāvacara, yogin, or meditationist. It is to be noted

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that the endeavour of keeping this consciousness pure, undefiled, and steady is the main objective of the yogic system in the Orient. And the feeling is the best means of practising the maintenance of memory to attain this purpose. The vedanānupassanā, or the observation of feeling, has been fully described in the 9th chapter of the second phase of this research.

More subtle is the method of observing respiration through *phassa* or contact or touch. This method is fully described by Buddhaghosa in the Ānāpāna-sati-kathā of the 8th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. In inhalation, the air comes in contact with the nose-tip, then with the heart, and at last with the navel; while in exhalation, the air at first leaves the navel, then reaches the heart, and at last the nose-tip. One is to be aware of the fine touch of the air at these spots continuously. In practice, however, the contact or the touch of the air with the inner membrane of the nose in inhalation as well as in exhalation is continuously kept in mind. This practice is obviously subtle; the practice of this method gradually feels the subtle touch sensation spreading throughout the body.

The Master has, however, dealt with the general aspect of Ānāpāna; and the same method, that is, through feeling, would be productive of a good result in conformity with the Master's precept of non-attachment, non-ego, and Nibbānic aloofness. This practice quickly makes the mind calm, quiet, and free from mental speech and thinking (vitakka and vicāra). When the mind settles down, it becomes easier to observe it (the mind). The mind is, of course, not so patent as respiration and feeling. We have to observe the mind through the mind itself. The observing mind must be certainly different from the observed mind; in other words, the subjective mind observes the objective mind; the two minds are not the same. Apparently anomalous, the position can be explained by the theory of momentary mind.

We are often aware of our moods and emotions; we also know when we are disturbed and when we are concentrated; if we obtain samādhi, we are sure to know what it is; similarly we know when we are in bondage and when we approach a state of liberation. This sort of mental observation is possible; the Master's precept proceeds in such a preliminary way as this; he

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has never tried to confuse the simple thing with complex theories. If we were to indulge in the luxury of theories, we would surely be finding ourselves in hot discussion about matters knowable only through meditative realization and not by the application of logic or common sense. Yogins never discuss controversial doctrines; they state what they have experienced; if we try to engage them in controversy, there will be an end of the topic from them; we shall never be able to get them again on the same subject.

Hence the observation of the mind may be silently conducted; mental silence is necessary for this purpose for mental speech, if brought about in the mind, will obscure right discernment. The need for us in this practice would be to observe what passes in the mental field. When we are habituated to observe our own mind, it should be naturally easy to observe the mind of others; this is mere common sense; but this shows the way to know other minds. The mind-to-mind knowledge, however, operates in the form plane or in the form phenomenon; the extent and the depth of trance would determine a similar quality of knowledge; the mind of the yogin in the form trance operates this supernormal knowledge on the mind of persons who are in the material plane. Apparently anomalous, this position can be easily explained.

The yogāvacara or yogin would organize, according to the Ceto-pariya-ñāṇa-kathā of the 13th chapter of the *Visuddhimagga* and the Ārammaṇa-kathā of the *Aṭṭhasālini*, the preliminary device for this knowledge; he would run the usual course of javana for the iddhi, attain the moment of absorption (appanā), and then know the mind of others through the superknowledge arisen with the last moment of "iddhi-citta" or supernormal mind if his own. In other words, he would at first sit in samādhi and then direct his attention to other minds than his own. He would, however, know those minds through the iddhi-oriented mind of his own only. However, he would not be able to know minds at stages higher than his own.

Buddhist Conception of Past Births

The Buddhist doctrine, yoga, or philosophy does not recognize an immutable soul, self, or conscious entity within or without

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our material or immaterial body. This universal truth is primarily based on the Buddha's finding apparently through his deep mediation and/or perhaps through his discovery of ways to complete liberation. Even in our common sense we would not like to assert that any material entity inside or outside our physical body is the soul. We might consider the immaterial principle, conscious or un-conscious, to be the soul. If the soul is perishable, it might be subject to change; in this case Buddhism would not probably object to our assertion, of course, as a conv entional term (sammuti sacca). If imperishable, the soul would be unchangeable; this would never be acceptable to Buddhism.

Such a position as this should have precluded the theory of past births in Buddhism. But Buddhism abounds in numerous stories of rebirths; the present is explained by the past; the present is likewise what will have moulded the future. Such a state of affairs should have, to our common sense, posited a soul in the making or becoming worse or better throughout eternity. The kamma theory of Buddhism would only partly accept this position, but it would flatly reject the soul theory even so changing. For it does not find any soul within or without this or any other body anywhere in the cosmic world. This is certainly based on the meditative experience of the Buddha and all his liberated disciples.

Every one of us had past births, according to Buddhism. But the future births may terminate under certain conditions. So the past birth is, according to Buddhism, a universal truth, not excepting any inhabitants of heaven or hell. Almost all the Oriental doctrines and religions take up this view. There are innumerable stories of past births in the literature of these philosophies and religions. Consequently the Oriental protagonists of this doctrine would have a very poor opinion of those persons who may happen to hold a view that there was no past birth. Philosophy might be contended against, but the yogic experience cannot be negated by any one. The whole lot of our modern conceptions regarding the evolution of human life cannot possibly set aside the experience of a single yogin who might prove that he had a past birth.

The psychology of the Abhidhamma has developed a theory

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of rebirth ostensibly on the basis of the Buddha's several discourses on the subject. Briefly stated, the momentary mind of a human being ceases at the last moment of his life-span; the craving of the person for life (bhava) immediately germinates in an appropriate birth, according to his deserts; there are several laws and conditions operating this rebirth; at any rate he has to begin his life over again; after the first moment of his germination or emergence in any plane of existence, the bhavaṅga or the unconscious mind runs throughout his life-span, unless and until disturbed by the cognitive process. The round of birth, death, and rebirth never ceases unless and until he is liberated.

A liberated person has to die in the plane common to all others, but the rebirth link of a liberated person ceases with the release of the last mental moment (cuti-citta); for the link is said to be already broken at the moment of his realizing the knowledge of liberation. Thus Siddhārtha, the Bodhisattva, is, for example, said to have been already extinguished (Nibbuta) at the moment of his realizing the Bodhi or the Liberation with Omniscience; his ultimate passing away at the end of his life-span was, according to Buddhism, only the physical cessation of his body.

The test of any past life or existence of ours should be naturally the presence or absence of its remembrance. We have ostensibly no such clear remembrance of the past birth at present, but no one, even we ourselves, can guarantee that we shall have no remembrance in the future. The Buddha's system of meditation implies that a yogin will remember his past in spite of himself. The remembrance, when it occurs, will surely make him or us believe it; afterwards he or we may stick to it or not. It is common among meditationists that a spiritual phenomenon fully believed at the time of its occurrence gradually fades away after the event; with this fading the belief of such an experience as this also fades away.

Rebirth and Dogmatism

The Buddhist conception of past birth has been already briefly stated in the above section. The same process operates in the

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future births of non-liberated persons, according to the Buddhist *Abhidhamma*. The round of past and future births of a person is termed "sansāra" or literally the ever flowing current of events or briefly the world for the person. So we find the Buddha's so-called first utterance recorded in verse No. 153 of the *Dhamma-pada*. The commentary on this verse says: "This precept (Dhamma-desanā), having been uttered, as an extemporaneous utterance (udāna, by the Buddha) while being seated beneath the Bodhi-tree, was later on told by the Master when asked by the elder Ānanda."

Although the Bodhi-kathā of the Mahāvagga (Vinaya) does not give us this verse, the commentary on this book, however, quotes this very verse as the first word of the Buddha. The commentary of the first book of the *Abhidhamma* also gives this verse as the first word of the Buddha and admits that it is according to the reciters of the *Dhamma-pada*. This verse is as follows:

Many a round of births
Have I wandered unremitting,
Searching the house-builder,
Got painful births again and again.

Herein 'searching the house-builder' means, says the commentary, 'I, searching the craving-builder, the maker of this self-constituting house (body), so long many a round of births, many a hundred thousand births, wandered, moved on, and roamed from one to another (birth) unremitting.' This authenticated utterance explicitly corroborates the Buddhist thesis that the Buddha remembered his past lives. There were also many more monks and nuns who are said to have remembered their past lives.

Some laymen and other people are also reported to have partly remembered their past life and even recognized some persons and signs of their past association. Sāketa Jātaka No. 68 is unique in this respect. It says:

It is said that the Master, accompanied by the congregation of monks, was residing near (the town of) Sāketa. When he was entering the Añjana forest (his place of residence), a

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certain old Brāhmaṇa, an inhabitant of Sāketa, while going out of the town, saw the Master, and taking a firm hold of his ankles, said:

'Dear son! Well, sons should take care of the parents in their old age, should they not? Why did you not show yourself so long to us? You are however seen by me. Come along (with me) to see the mother.'

He (the Brāhmaṇa) led the Master to his house. The Master went there and was seated on the proffered seat with the congregation of monks. The Brāhmaṇi also, (thinking that) 'my son is now come up over here', came in and fell at the Master's feet and said:

'Dear son! Where had you gone so long? The old parents should be attended to, should they not?' She wept bitterly, brought her other sons and daughters, and made them bow down (at the feet of the Master), asking them 'Come and bow to the Brother'...' The Master after taking the food preached to both of them the jarā (old age) sutta. At the completion of the precept, both of them were established in the fruit of the non-returner, the third stage. Thereafter the Master rose up from the seat and went to the Añjana forest...

This birth-story says further:

Seated in the Dhammasabhā (deliberation hall), the monks raised the question: 'Friends! the Brāhmaṇa knows the Master's father as Suddhodana and mother as Mahāmāyā. So knowing also, he with his wife says that the Master is their son. The Master also accepts this. What is the cause?' The Master (coming there and) hearing their question said: 'Monks! both of them call their son as their son...''

And thereafter the Master explained to them that in the past they had been his parents, younger uncles and aunts, and elder uncles and aunts for hundreds of lives.

The concluding portion and a similarly titled story No. 237 briefly state how an impromptu feeling of pleasure at seeing an unacquainted person shows the former association with him.

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This, however, appears to stand to common sense. The Brāhmaṇa as well as his wife must have been endowed with a sense other than mere common sense. Apparently the remembrance of the past life appears to us as something dogmatic. In our present frame of mind, we would not have believed even the best of authorities on the subject. The ultimate solution of this question would or might lie in our actual remembrance of such phenomena. This will, of course, need practice for which a tentative acceptance of this possibility would be prerequisite.

Besides the Abhidhammic theory of rebirth from the psychological point of view as stated in the preceding section, there is another theory, probably a general view among unsophisticated people, concerning rebirth in the text itself. Thus the 38th sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya* says on the phenomenon of the first conception as follows: "Monks! due to the contact of three things there comes about the occurrence of conception. Herein the parents come in contact; the mother is in the state of monthly course; Gandhabba is also readily present..." What is this Gandhabba? Obviously this is some vital principle ready and present for germination at the sexual contact of the parents.

> The commentary on this sutta explains this term thus: Gandhabba means a being (satta) approaching there; the phrase—'readily present'—means it does not stand near about watching (waiting) for the contact of the parents; but mechanized through the mechanism of kamma or action, a being about to be re-born under the circumstance becomes (available)...

So this theory of Gandhabba being present at the time of the sexual contact, in case of the human conception, is generally in conformity with the other Oriental theories of human conception. This is, however, seemingly in disagreement with the sophisticated Abhidhammic theory already mentioned above.

Nāgasena in the 4th part of the *Milinda-Pāñha* fully but exegetically discusses this point. He also takes Gandhabba as a being seeking to be reborn in a particular case only; in many cases he takes up semen as one of the efficient causes; in exceptional cases he has cited the textual extraordinary human

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births, as well as instances of parthenogenetic conception of fowls. In short, there is the necessity of a vital principle, whether it be conceived as Gandhabba, semen, or the germinating mental moment. If so, the past and future births become quite possible. Moreover, the experience of yogins or yogic savants definitely posits the cycles of past lives and we cannot deny the yogic evidence of these savants. For conducting practices of yoga in general and Buddhist yoga in particular, however, there is seemingly no necessity of acceptance of rebirth theories; as the three suttas preached in Sāvatthi and one in Rājagaha on Bhaddekaratta contemplation of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (III. 31 to 34 suttas) encourage us to concentrate in the present alone.

Mutual Dependence of Supernormal Knowledges

The mutual dependence of supernormal branches of knowledge shows the Buddha's system of developing these supernormal powers to be gradual, natural, and ostensibly practical. In the sphere of pure meditation also we find the same systematic development of psychic stages from the first form trance, through its upper or higher three jhānas, to the formless trance, or absorption (samāpatti). The latter has also four stages rising from spatial expansion, through its typical categories, to the fourth formless expanse of rarefied consciousness.

It is known from various earlier sources that Prince Siddhārtha had organized the first trance and dwelt therein for a considerable length of time. It was when he was still living his household life. Had he pulled on with this unique trance unhampered, he would have probably attained all the gradual trances, absorptions, supernormal knowledge, and even arhatship, as he did years after on this very foundation of the first trance. There is a strange reason given why he had to go astray for the period of six years in fruitless austerities, as follows:

The Pubba-kamma-pilotika Buddha-apadāna, the 10th verse of the 39th Vagga of the Apadāna consists of 33 gāthās or stanzas. These give the former bad actions of the Prince or the Bodhisattva causing the various unpleasant experiences to him as the fruits of those bad actions. The three stanzas numbered 29, 30, and 31 toward the end say:

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(When in my former life I was) Jotipāla, I had pronounced (the opinion) then towards the (preceding) Buddha Kassapa: 'How will such a Shaved one (as the said ascetic) get the Bodhi? For the Bodhi is extremely difficult to obtain.' Due to the maturation of that (blasphemous) kamma, I had to undertake many kinds of penance for six years in Uruvelā. Only after that (penance) I obtained the Bodhi. I did not however by that way (of penance) obtain the Bodhi, the Best one. (On the contrary) I quested (strayed away) towards the wrong path, owing to the hindrance put up by the former kamma.

Although unbelievable at first sight, we actually find many instances of unexpected adversities of famous persons in the Buddha's time, which were explained often as the maturing fruits of former kammas by the Master and sometimes by the circumstantial situation. For instance, the pitiable destiny of the old kings of Magadha and Kosala, Bimbisāra and Pasenadi, respectively; the fate of Mahā-moggallāna, the foremost in iddhi powers; the massacre of the Shākyas and the disintegration of their ancient kingdom; other unfortunate accidents said to have fallen upon monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen.

Thus the first form trance, discovered by the Bodhisattva in his father's farm land (pitu sakkassa kammante) in his home-land, was the foundation, upon which the Bodhisattva seemingly built up almost the whole of his system of meditation and its supernormal developments. The smooth, even working of such a procedure as this provided an easy access to and for his organizing even the supramundane stages of liberation (arhat-ship). The last stage of these developments is given as twofold, through meditation and through insight. In case of meditation the steps, or stages, or states of gradual trances form and formless come into operation culminating in the cessation of feeling and consciousness, while in the other case the intellectual insight comes into operation and liberates the mind from its craving and delusion. In this two-fold system there is no allusion to anyone of our metaphysical and philosophical question or problems.

In such a context as this his well-known non-committals as

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regards these questions and problems are quite understandable; whatever was not directly perceived, discerned, or realized by him was ignored or not entertained by him; such a position as this is probably unthinkable elsewhere. This was possible in his system, because it rose up gradually on the foundation of such a natural trance as the first form trance mentioned above. Naturally his automatic system entails an interdependence of one step, stage, or state on the other, whether it be the field of observation, contemplation, trance, absorption, or intellectual concatenation.

Consequently we might naturally expect the mutual dependence of supernormal branches of knowledge in his system in spite of their exuberance and apparently manifold off-shoots. Thus the capacity of divine seeing and divine hearing would be needed in almost all the supernormal phenomena. Similarly the supernormal mind-to-mind knowledge would be imperative in these excursions. In the supernormal remembrance of one's own past life, the series of events connected with such a life as this would primarily require divine sight for a rapid survey of the whole series; the apparent remembrance must entail the visual discernment or presentation of past or future events at first before any attempt be made at finding out the other details.

The supernormal mind-to-mind knowledge would be required not only to know the mind of others but also to know one's own mind very often. In fact, the remembrance of the past life obviously implies the vivid realization of the whole series of one's own past experiences, predominantly mental, now at present lying dormant or forgotten. The *Yoga-sūtra* in its 18th sūtra of the third part says: "By realizing the dormant impressions (of one's accumulated experiences) there appears the knowledge of the former birth." The explanation of the dormant impression (Samsakāra) ordinarily obtaining in each experience is given in the 11th sūtra of the first part. This impression is stated therein to be the cause of remembrance.

Thus we might logically infer that we are bound to remember something about our past experiences due to the presence of their impressions in the mental field. The mind purified and steadied by the frequent practice of meditation must become

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an appropriate medium for a vivid remembrance of such accumulated impressions as discussed above. Hence, whether we believe or disbelieve the doctrine of rebirth, transmigration, or resurrection, the remembrance, while it appears and is maintained during the period of meditation, trance, or supernormal knowledge, is sure to convince us during the time at least that the remembrance belongs to our own past experiences. The yogic realization cannot be shaken off by any adverse dogmatism in the world.

Since both of these two knowledges, mind-to-mind knowledge and remembrance of past lives, are the regular stages of the supernormal knowledge, this phase of the research had been devoted to these two subjects. One should closely study them, especially the last one, the remembrance of one's own past lives. It is this knowledge that gave direct and necessary data to the Bodhisattva for formulating the dependent origination (paticca-samuppāda) to explain the round of births. This is regarded as one of the principal bases constituting Buddhist philosophy among the philosophies of the world dealing with the vital problems of human worries and their solution.

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II

Investigation of Tranquil Devices: Kasiṇa

Devices to Organize Foundation Trance

IN THE third section of the preceding chapter, we have already mentioned the foundation trance (padakajjhāna) as basic to supernormal knowledge (abhiññā). The foundation trance is, as we know, taken to be the fourth stage of the form (rūpāvacara) trance. It has also been briefly stated therein that the preliminary state of this trance is generally attained, if one meditates naturally or quietly without speaking in the mind. In the speechless (avitakka) meditation one is of course to be fully conscious, awake, patient, attentive, and alert to awareness around one's body. This state might eventually terminate in the first jhāna or trance.

Gradually being upgraded, the first trance reaches, passing through the intervening stages, the fourth stage of trance. These four stages of the form trance are basic to the organization of any meditative achievement in iddhi or supernormal power. These trances can, however, be directly organized without resorting to any device, as has been already stated in the first phase of this research. But Buddhaghosa has insisted in his work on the device of kasiṇa as competent to produce these trances.

The principle, upon which the device of kasiṇa practice is

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generally expounded and found operative, appears to bear the following salient features:

1. The kasiṇa device recommended by Buddhaghosa is of a small dimension and easily manageable.
2. It is circular in shape and uniform in colour or characteristic.
3. The circle is to measure one foot in diameter. Thus the circumference would be of about three feet and two inches; it would have an area of about the four-fifths of a square foot.

Within such a small size of kasiṇa the eyes can easily dwell on the centre without straying away beyond the boundary line of the circle. The marginal sight also would be contained within it.

The central point in this circle is neither mentioned nor recommended to be marked therein. The idea seems to cover the whole field of the kasiṇa uniformly at a glance without concentrating on any point within the circle. Nonetheless the eyes will have to be directed towards the central point or part anyhow, but spread evenly without fixing the eyes at any particular point, part, or sector. The entire field of the kasiṇa is to be covered at a single glance. This would ensure the uniform perception of the kasiṇa design.

The manner of gazing at the kasiṇa is with both the eyes moderately open and fixed to the middle spot within the circle, so that the whole design of the kasiṇa comes before the eyes. Buddhaghosa suggests further that the kasiṇa should be well kept in mind by repeating a word indicative of the name of the kasiṇa under direct observation. This is ostensibly resorted to only in the preparatory stage of the practice. For a stage of samādhi will never be obtained, while the mind be employed in mental or verbal speech. The purpose of gazing at the kasiṇa is to grasp or learn its sign well enough to be able to recall it vividly with the eyes closed.

The vivid recall or remembrance of the sign is termed the uggaha nimitta or the learnt sign or the after-image of the sign. The attainment of this stage may look simple and easy, but in

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practice it is not so. The capacity of producing the after-image of the sign may differ widely from individual to individual. It cannot, however, be beyond the capacity of any one of us, if we have a little patience and perseverance in continuing the practice.

The learning or gazing at the sign with the intention of recalling it later should give us the clue to the secret. This would entail the shutting of the eyes off and on, or withdrawing the attention from the design of the kasiṇa, to test whether or not we remember the sign vividly. The insistent advice of our authority is to repeat the learning of the sign doggedly until the after-image is produced. Buddhaghosa would not have done so, if he had not been sure of it.

It is to be marked here that a fundamental difference exists between the learning or gazing at the sign of kasiṇa and the organizing of the first trance through the direct method mentioned above and dealt with in the first phase of this research. In the latter method we are not to gaze at anything at all. The visible objects within sight would be present as stimuli before the eyes, but our attention would not be drawn towards them; these stimuli would then be seen as a mere pattern of visible objects; we would even then not be looking at them; our attention being drawn neither outward nor inward would not generate the cognitive process upto javana or impulse which is necessary for knowing the objects as we do.

In the kasiṇa method, we look or gaze directly at the visible sign with the intention of recalling it later; the uniformity of the design prevents us of course from dwelling in other characteristics of the underlying objects than that of the visible surface of the design alone. The intention and operation of learning the design are always present in kasiṇa practice; this is never found in the direct method mentioned above.

The direct method leads one direct to the form trance, while the kasiṇa method has to obtain the counterpart sign upon the after-image of the design and then to await the form trance to appear through the counterpart sign. But both the savants, the authors of the said two works, *Visuddhi-magga* and *Vimutti-magga*, anywhere in the two works, do not say how the form phenomenon appears on them and what it is like. They also

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do not differentiate the form from the perception of the material substance. In short, they leave us in the dark about its actual experience.

Nevertheless both the methods might give us the form trance earlier or later, directly or indirectly. Even if introduced later, the kasiṇa method would certainly be serviceable for the organization of iddhis and abhiññā under research. It is, however, to be noted that the four form trances are not enumerated in the total number of devices. In the text and commentary of the First Book of the *Abhidhamma*, all the eight kasiṇa, one by one, are given in each of the four form trances. But the kasiṇa is not restricted to the small size of the artificial one as advocated by our savants.

Kasina Eulogized over Other Devices

Budhaghosa specifically and strongly recommends the kasiṇa method over others and says that it is the best of all the remaining devices. In doing so he has made some critical remarks on them, which are worth consideration. This adverse criticism on some of them might change our preconceived opinion even on the popular practice of ānāpāna or respiration. It is noticeable here that some plausible reasons have been given by him for his advocacy of the kasiṇa practice over all the rest. His criticism of other devices should be viewed only in comparison to the kasiṇa practice, and not against their individual merit and utility.

Is the kasiṇa practice really superior to other devices? Let us see what he has to say thereof. On the subject of "increasing and non-increasing" of the forty devices in the later section of the 3rd chapter of his work, he says, among other things.

> In (out of) these forty Kammaṭṭhānas, the ten kasiṇas only are to be increased (developed in extension). As large a space as the kasiṇa pervades, within that much of the space one is enable to hear sound through divine ear (dibba sota), to see shapes through divine eye (dibba cakkhu), and to know the mind of other persons through mind-to-mind (ceto pariya) knowledge.

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This is true logically too.

From the Master's precept in the Upakkiless sutta (III.27) of the *Majjhima*, we learn that the supernormal phenomenon is co-extensive with the samādhi a yogāvacara or yogin obtains. But Buddhaghosa has ostensibly meant a counterpart sign in the above passage, whereas here samādhi was mentioned by the Master. The counterpart sign is a product of pre-samādhi and not samādhi itself. The samādhi mentioned by the Master above is an active meditative mind. With this difference Buddhaghosa's remark is true.

A samādhi does not always mean a state of equanimity devoid of percept and concept. In kasiṇa practice the counterpart sign is as much a meditative phenomenon as any one of angelic or heavenly visitors seen in devotional practices. There is, however, a slight difference between the former and the latter phenomena. In the latter the spiritual visitors are often said to have spoken to the devotees, whereas in the former the counterpart sign does not speak by itself and is only a medium of operating the divine ear. Buddhaghosa says further:

"Remembrance of the body and disagreeable contemplation should not be increased. Why so? Because these are limited in spate and devoid of benefit. As these (are), so the rest are also not to be increased." These needed explanation, so he gives the reason:

> Why so? For out of these, the sign of ānāpāna, if increased, gets only the volume of air increased and it is also limited in space. Hence due to its being defective and also due to its being limited in space, this (device) should not be increased. This remark will need some explanation.

The practice of observing respirations is a means of calming the mind and thereby of obtaining samādhi. It is not directly connected with the operation of supernormal power and branches of knowledge. The air of the respiration practice is physical air, whereas in the air kasiṇa, our attention is drawn to the perception of air, not the physical air itself.

Kasina versus Brahmavihara

Buddhaghosa says further: "Brahma-vihāra have persons for

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their object or support. If their sign be increased, only the crowd of persons (sattas) gets increased and there is no purpose for this. And therefore this (device) also is not to be increased."

This type of meditation is the time-honoured pre-Buddhistic one, the sort of contemplation for the attainment of subtle or mystic region called Brahmaloka. This is the heavenly abode of forms akin to the mental field of the form trance. By the practice of this trance the yogin is said to attain such a region as this Brahmaloka. But the alternative has been the contemplation of four, or any one of the four, Brahmavihāras. The practice starts, proceeds, and rather ends on the support of persons, for whom each of the four feelings is entertained and extended.

As the meditation spreads, the support will have to be increased likewise. Persons are discrete numbers, not continuous like the spread of uniform plain surface in kasiṇa. Moreover, a person is actually not existing in reality as a natural (sabhāva) dhamma does. Obviously the increasing of this type of contemplation is not to the point in serious Buddhism that is Nibbāna-oriented. There is no instance in the whole range of Buddhist literature when a person ever obtained liberation through this type of contemplation alone without proper review. So Buddhaghosa is right in his bold dictum.

Other Views on this Subject

Unlike Buddhaghosa, Upatissa has included the four Brahmavihāras in the subjects of meditation to be increased together with the usual kasiṇas in his work. Thus in the Seventh Chapter of the *Vimutti-magga*, he says: "Fourteen subjects of meditation should be increased, namely, the ten Kasiṇas and the four immeasurables. The other twenty-four should not be increased." (p. 65) The total number of subjects of meditation in his work, unlike what is found in the *Visuddhi-magga*, comes to thirty-eight. (p. 63)

Upatissa has herein excluded the first two infinite spheres and included them in the ten kasiṇas; the commentary on the first book of the *Abhidhamma* in the section of the first jhāna also gives the number as thirty-eight and for details refers to

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the *Visuddhi-magga*. The *Visuddhi-magga* itself mentions this number in the 6th chapter as 'ārammaṇa.' The commentary says that the number has come in the text, but the available text does not give this number in one place. It appears that the number was fluid and the total was a traditional acceptance; but Buddhaghosa found the number forty as a standard one instead of the so-called textual number of thirty-eight.

But the real discrepancy between Upatissa and Buddhaghosa here is that of the inclusion and the exclusion of the four Brahmavihāras respectively in the principal subjects fit for increasing them in extension. This shows that the two savants are definitely divided in their estimation of the efficacy of these four time-honoured contemplations. The Master himself had once disapproved of Sāriputta's teaching of this very contemplation to a dying (Majjhima II.47 sutta) Brāhmaṇa on the plea that Brāhmaṇas are generally attached to the region of Brahmas. This shows that Buddhaghosa is right in the exclusion of this type from the subjects under discussion.

In this context it would be interesting to see how the identification of a lost work in the original was tried to be established with the present work and its author. The supposition is seemingly based on a chance mention of the *Vimutti-magga* and its author as Upatissa in connection with the word, 'ekacce' (some dissenters) in the *Visuddhi-magga* by the elder Dhammapāla. The topic will be taken up later.

Nevertheless this type of contemplation is said to be excellent and might be profitably imitated by us. Even arhats are reported to have habitfually resorted to this contemplation for their recreation. The Master also taught this on some occasions and employed it for its supernormal influence on persons under adverse circumstances. In a narrower sense this sort of contemplation is also found in the 33rd sūtra of the first part of the *Yogasūtra*; this is given therein as one of the eight devices for overcoming hindrances (antarayas) to the attainment of individual pure consciousness (pratyak-cetana-adhigama). So the Yoga philosophy also has not given it a very high position. In Buddhism, however, the inclusion of these four Brahmavihāras in the regular list of kammaṭṭhānas shows that the pre-Buddhistic position of this type of meditation is kept intact.

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III

Investigation of Formless Device Versus Kasiṇa

Kasina versus First Formless Device: Limitless Space

BUDDHAGHOSA'S INTENTION in trying to place kasiṇa practice over all other devices seems to recommend its utility for all purposes in meditation. We have to give it serious consideration when it has to be evaluated on the ground of important subjects of meditation. Is it really superior to such absorptions as those of the formless category? Let us investigate kasiṇa versus the formless and vice versa. We shall not be inclined to adopt one of the two for our practice till the benefit and practicability arising out of them become clear to us.

This sort of investigation will serve the double purpose, the purpose of choosing a proper device and that of understanding the intricacies of these devices. The clear understanding of a device often facilitates its organization. There is no way to arouse interest in a difficult subject other than to investigate it among similar subjects. The formless subject of meditation has a very high position among Buddhistic samādhis; this is placed in the higher scale of gradual trances; this samādhi is entirely devoid of forms; no mental speech, deliberation, thinking or emotion are to be found herein; respiration ceases here and samādhi spreads in all directions without limit.

Still the yogāvacara or yogin is fully awake, alert, and

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conscious in this samādhi. Even Siddhas can scarcely arouse him without his will to arise. The means of organizing it is the successive organization of gradual trances. This would require, according to our savant himself, the organization of anyone of kasiṇas. If so, his criticism that the formless absorptions are not to be increased is open to re-interpretation. In the same section of "Increasing and Non-increasing" of his work, he says:

"In the Formless support also the sky (space) is only (the space left after) the removal of the kasṇia (that is, the counterpart sign of it). And this (spatial support) is grasped by means of the removal of the kasiṇa. Thereafter nothing happens therein even if this (spatial support) be increased." This is true without affecting the quality of the Limitless Space; for what is limitless will surely admit of no further increase and his remark becomes trite. The artificial kasiṇa and its after-image cannot vie with the profoundness of the limitless; Buddhaghosa cannot mean anything of the sort; what he might mean seems to be merely the eulogy of his favourite device. Hence we are to be careful of what he says sometimes about the supremacy of one subject over another.

Kasina versus Second Formless Device: Limitless Consciousness

In the Buddhist Abhidhamma the role of consciousness is uppermost. It is not merely an awareness, but the knowing itself. The knowing is classified in various ways to give as many knowing minds as there are items in each classification. This knowing mind arises simultaneously with many mental concomitants constituting all the mental functions we know. Now this consciousness is said to admit of being organized as a separate kasiṇa as well as a formless and limitless expanse. The difference between these two is not quite clear. The text had included it in the ten kasiṇas and also regularly in the formless expanse as the second one. The latter is given in the *Visuddhi-magga*, while the former is briefly entertained in the *Vimutti-magga*.

The commentary on the First Book of the *Abhidhamma* in the section of the śeṣa (the remaining) kasiṇas says about it as follows:

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In (out of) them (the ten kasiṇas) the consciousness kasiṇa (as given in the text) becomes also the consciousness spread as a formless kind in the sky (space); it is also the absorption (samāpatti) of the limitless consciousness (in the formless category); both of these in all respects belong to the category of the formless. Hence this is not treated of herein.

This is as much as to say that the consciousness kasiṇa is really a formless expanse or infinity and should not have been placed in the kasiṇas; it appears so to us too.

As described in the preceding section, Buddhaghosa continues the topic of "Increasing and Non-increasing" as given below: "Consciousness being a natural (sabhāva) dhamma (cannot be increased; for there is an invariable law that) a natural dhamma cannot be increased." The essence of consciousness, that is, consciousness itself, cannot be increased. In the meditative state of the second formless absorption, it is the support that is co-extensive with the limitless sky or space and consciousness grasps this support. Hence due to the limitless support, the consciousness grasping it assumes the limitless dimension.

It will not be out of place here to mention that pure consciousness (cit, samvit) is regarded in some Oriental philosophy as the soul (ātman) in an individual; when it is limitless, it is the universal soul (brahman). So the limitless expanse of consciousness in the second formless absorption would be, if accompanied with the corresponding conception (bhāvanā), the meditative state of the universal soul. Buddhism regards this state as impermanent and therefore it is neither the individual soul nor the universal one. The Master's system of meditation provides us with a way to transcend this state by organizing the third stages of formlessness.

Kasina versus Third Formless Device: Nothingness

The concept of nothingness in Buddhism is not, strictly speaking, metaphysical one. The philosophical point of view is ever open to controversy. In samādhi, however, such a state as that of nothingness is said to exist; as otherwise this could not have been found in the yogic circles so widely. In the

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Buddhistic system this nothingness is organized in the third stage of formless absorption.

Buddhaghosa pushes on with his short but significant argument as stated in the preceding section thus: "The withdrawal of consciousness (from the relative support) is only the absence of consciousness." It is evident that there is no possibility of increasing it where there is nothing. It is true; but it does not affect the importance and usefulness of this absorption.

The support of nothingness was known long before the advent of the Buddha. For we have several instances of this absorption being organized and accomplished by yogins mentioned in the text and the Birth Stories (Jātakas). Bāvari, a royal priest of Kosala, resorting to the southern part of India devoted, it is said in the 5th part of the Sutta-nipāta, to this absorption of nothingness.

The classical instance is, however, that of Ālāra Kālāma, the former teacher of our own Bodhisattva Siddhārtha, who is said to have organized it as a daily practice. He was reported even to have been so absorbed in this samādhi that he neither saw nor heard five hundred cats passing by the spot he was seated on. In the gradual course of trances and absorptions, this support occupies the seventh place. The benefit of this practice is normally said to be the attainment of the corresponding region of Brahmaloka without forms.

Hence Buddhaghosa may not be taken seriously in this sort of critical remarks. His obvious purpose is to plead for the kasiṇa practice so fundamental, in his eyes, to the whole scheme of trance and iddhi and abhiññā, or supernormal power and knowledge. Moreover, the stages of these trances are different from that of any kasiṇa; for the practice of a kasiṇa ultimately leads one anyhow to these very trances, if it be successful so far; whereas these trances are the very stages of attainment sought.

Kasina versus Fourth Formless Device: Rarefied Consciousness

This stage of the formless absorption, little understood generally, is difficult to explain. It is given as the consciousness neither present in this absorption nor absent. The double

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negatives make it all the more difficult to be comprehended, let alone its organization effectively. The commentatorial explanation is something like this: This absorption rises on the support of nothingness; the yogin himself wonders at this and feels: 'How peaceful this absorption is! wherein even the absence (of consciousness, that is, nothingness) serving for a support, one exists'.

The support of nothingness is the probable key to this absorption. The conception of nothingness transcends all forms and concepts; the mind becomes just void of consciousness; this stage serves for the support of a subtle consciousness, called the residual consciousness. This is imaginable; without any intention, it is said, of organizing it, one attains because there is no intention of staying where he is, or going ahead.

This type of absorption was also existing before the time of the Bodhisattva's striving period. It was Uddaka Rāmaputta, who said to the Bodhisattva: "Rāma, having realized, known, and organized it by himself, taught this dhamma . . . " (I. 26 Pāsarāsi sutta, *Majjhima*). This 'dhamma' refers to this very absorption, while 'Rāma' probably refers to the predecessor of Uddaka, who discovered the type of doctrine and meditation Uddaka taught.

The consciousness present in this meditative support is very subtle and must be tinged with the disposition discernible in its unique organization: "Although he (the yogin) regards it as peaceful, but he does not entertain any taste or will as 'I will advert to it, I will organize it, I will resolve (to maintain it), I will rise up (from this trance), (and/or) I will review it (afterward)'." This sort of mental disposition makes the consciousness subtle or, so to say, rarefied. Thus absorption has consciousness neither present nor absent. There is, however, no cessation of consciousness in it. So this absorption is unique as that of nothingness.

Buddhaghosa in like manner says regarding this support also: "The support of 'neither consciousness nor non-consciousness' is a natural (sabhāva) dhamma also and hence not to be increased." Since the consciousness whether patent as in the second formless, or latent as in this fourth formless is a natural

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dhamma, it is incapable of increasing. But it is the highest stage of samādhi obtainable by any yogin even outside the circle of arhats.

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IV

Investigation of Deliberative Device: Remembrance

Kasina versus Remembrance

Buddhaghosa gives us forty devices (kammaṭṭhānas) in the third chapter of his work, the *Visuddhi-magga*. There are three sets, each of four devices; and two single devices. The first set of ten devices is the ten kasiṇas. The second set of ten devices is the ten states of the dead body. The third set of ten devices is the ten remembrances. Out of these ten remembrances, the popular is the Ānāpāna (respiration) sati (memory). The remembrances of the body and the death are important for gaining insight in the Dhamma. So are the allied remembrances of the bodily subjects described in the first part of the Sati-Paṭṭhāna sutta.

There remain the six of the ten remembrances which are described in the seventh chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. These remembrances can be organized through deliberation only, so they appear from what we understand of our savant's handling of them. Remembrance as such, he says, can have only the access or pre-samādhi, and not the appanā state of samādhi. These do not bring about the appanā state and therefore none of them produces any of the jhānas, accepting the two, the memory of respiration and that of the body, which bring about the appanā state and the jhāna.

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These six remembrances are—the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha, Sīla (virtue), cāga (readiness to offer), and Deity. If early Buddhism were inclined to the cult of bhakti or devotion, we might have found an elaborate method of worship, prayer, offering and meditation regarding at least the Buddha and the deity. The devotional method in the Oriental religion dwells on several rituals and imaginary contemplations to realize the deity worshipped. But our savant opines that this sort of meditative realization is not possible. The spiritual phenomena described in devotional literature experiences, however, contradict this opinion.

If the deities exist, their realization also must be possible. But the deliberative method of remembering them preclude the realization of their shape, colour and other paraphernalia. Not only deities but many members of the Saṅgha must be living in different regions of Heaven. These members, disciples, or saints, cannot be averse to an earnest remembrance. Many of them are reportedly endowed with supernormal powers and knowledge of births undergone by them. They must be aware of us in general, and devout Buddhists in particular. But there is no indication of this sort of possibility in the *Visuddhi-magga*.

Instead of this, the remembrance of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha gives us the quality of these Three Gems in full detail, as found in the canon. The quality is to be remembered, one by one. The method deliberation does not rise above remembrance. The purpose is to develop a great respect and reverence towards them. In such a comprehensive system of meditation as this, it is strange that we find little attention paid to the importance of devotional realization. Under these circumstances, there is no wonder for a later development of devotion so abundant in the Greater Vehicle.

In the Master's system of meditation we find mention of 'the appearance of the way to the Devayāna' in the Kevaṭṭa sutta (I. 11) of the *Dīgha*. The Master was relating to Kevaṭṭa, the son of a householder, an earlier event of a certain disciple of his, in the Mango-grove of Pāvārika in Nālandā. The name of this disciple is not given in the text, nor supplied in the commentary. The disciple wanted to know where these four elements, such as earth, water, fire and air completely

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cease. The text, related by the Master, goes on: "Then verily, Kevaṭṭa! that monk organized that sort of samādhi, in the collected mind of which there appeared the way to the Devayāna."

The commentary says: "There is no individual war to go to the region of Devas; this is the name of the knowledge of Iddhi-vidha . . . hence that is called the Devayāna." This explanation is obviously not to the point. So is the non-mention of the monk in question. The commentary says: "And there surely happens a monk of all the Buddhas, who becomes a quester after (the cessation of) the great (four) elements." The non-mention of the quester's name is strange; for the text says: "A certain monk in this very Order (Saṅgha)."

The heavenly way mentioned above can scarcely be identical with the Iddhi-vidha as explained by the commentator. It appears that the method of organizing a specific way was lost in the generalizing of the methods of various iddhis. The text says further that the monk successively visited the six regions of the Devas. And then the monk was informed that his question might the answered by the inhabitants of the Brahmaloka. The text, related by the Master, continues:

"Then verily, Kevaṭṭa! that monk organized that sort of samādhi, in the collected mind of which there appeared the way to the Brahmayāna (brahmayāniyo maggo)." This mystic way must be different from the heavenly way mentioned above, as otherwise there would have been little need to organize another way while on the mystic journey. The commentary proceeds;

> The way to the Brahmayāna (the word) is also like that of the word 'the way to the Devayāna.' All these (words) are the name (term) of the knowledge of the Iddhi-vidha—Devayāniyo maggo, or Brahmayāniyo maggo, or Dhammasetu (the Bridge of Dhamma), or the Appanā lasting one mental moment, or Sanniṭṭhānika (conclusive) Cetanā (will), or Mahaggata (form and formless) Citta (mind), or the knowledge of Abhiññā.

This is an example of a commentatorial confusion. This sort of confusion arises when the writer himself is not sure of the actual term and its import.

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Really speaking, many particular and specific devices of organizing supernormal powers in the Master's system have been presumably generalized in the confusing description of iddhi-vidha. This is so because the Elders gave more importance to the ultimate goal than to these practices. The same tendency is observable in the device of the remembrance of the Buddha, the members of the Saṅgha, and the Deity. Little attempt was made to utilize the indication of devotion to the noble and worthy ones shown by the Master himself. The few examples are to be noticed in the exhortation of the Master for paying respects and reverence to the Pacceka-Buddhas and the former Buddhas in the Isigili sutta (III. 16), the Ghaṭikāra sutta (II. 31), both of the *Majjhima*; Mahāpadāna sutta (II. 1) and Gakkavatti sutta (III. 3) regarding the Future Buddha Metteyya, of the *Dīgha*.

The remembrance of virtue, cāga (readiness to offer), and upasama (quietude, tranquillity, or equanimity) is to remember one's own quality of morality, generosity, and equanimity for self-confidence.

Kasina versus Speculation

We have seen how Buddhaghosa, in spite of the textual statement, recommends the kasiṇa practice in preference to all other devices. We cannot contradict him outright without contradicting the tradition his works claim to represent. Since the tradition is linked with the commentatorial literature he has tried to provide us with, we can little ignore or bypass what he has to say on the subject. Consequently we have to give a serious thought and a good trial to kasiṇa practice, if we are to achieve something in Buddhist supernormal power.

It is for this reason that the most easily understood practice on the Colour Kasiṇa is proposed to be dealt with in the subsequent few chapters in detail. At a first glance the kasiṇa design would seem to us as something commonplace and even ludicrous. But our authority assures us that the practice eventually leads us to something worth possessing. The externalizing of mental perception or conception sometimes appearing before our physical or mental eyes indicates that its colourification is possible.

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This is as much as to say that our ideas, if deeply observed, are tinged with some colour. This might look absurd. The mental field is not obviously devoid of shape and colour as we should like to think. The experience of dream should convince us that the scenes in a dream are also a sort of mental field. If so, the kasiṇa practice can certainly prove to be what our savant says.

The deliberative practice in the remembrances treated of in this chapter is not the speculative one. Speculation is not encouraged in early Buddhism; it leads one nowhere as can be gathered from the first sutta of the *Digha Nikāya* and several other suttas. Speculation is mostly conducted through mental speech that cannot give us any state of meditation. The speculative method tries to arrive at some conclusion mostly through logic, the verification of which can be only satisfactorily done through samādhi. And this sort of samādhi is, according to our savant, organizable through kasiṇa practice.

Yogic Analysis of Deliberation

Deliberation in Buddhism may be equated with 'manasikāra with vitakka and vicāra.' It is thus closely connected with mental speech and concept. Speculation is also conducted through a similar means, but it is generally employed in an enquiry after the unknown (diṭṭhi). Deliberation, on the other hand, is directed towards Buddhistic fundamentals and gives us an access or pre-samādhi in all the kammaṭṭhānas. In other words, deliberation is a device in Buddhistic yoga, while speculation is a hindrance to it.

If the deliberation be properly (yoniso) employed, the first of the eightfold path in Buddhism will appear as 'right thinking' (sammā-diṭṭhi). In the knowledge of the others' thought deliberation follows the supernormal sight, so it is that what we are able to see therein is translated into deliberation. As otherwise the mind-to-mind knowledge might have been unattainable by so many monks as are reported in the text and the commentary.

In the knowledge of one's own past life, our savant teaches us that we are to remember each and every action and event successively backward. This will also be done mostly through

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the mental eye and, where it is necessary, through deliberation. In both of these branches of knowledge, speculation will be rarely useful. The mental eye is, however, limited and hence the supernormal eye will have to be organized and obtained for quick remembrance.

Kasina and Deliberation

Deliberation may be usefully employed in kasiṇa practice also, as recommended by our savant. It is to deliberate over the kasiṇa design. In the colour kasiṇa, we can bring our deliberation to bear upon the uniform colour design of the kasiṇa. This might facilitate the learning of the sign and remember it very well. In order to remember anything, we have to dwell upon it with some deliberation. This purposive dwelling will be helpful in recalling it later more or less vividly. In Buddhistic psychology, the purposive knowing occurs in the javana stage only that runs ordinarily for seven mental moments.

According to this process, the colour design before the eyes would stand as a stimulus; it would disturb the substratum of our unconscious mind called bhavaṅga. This disturbance would generate a displacement of it. The conscious mind would advert to the cause of this displacement, that is, the stimulus. The eyes would then perceive the stimulus. This perception or the eye-consciousness is then received by the basic mind. This reception is transmitted to the investigating mind. Then the determining mind determines the investigated perception, turning it out as a concept. So far each step flitting lasts only for a mental moment.

This process comes up to seven mental moments. Then if the stimulus is purposively strong enough, the javana or impulse starts and runs ordinarily for seven mental moments. It is here that a deliberation may occur. In mental deliberation, the stimulus is the mental object itself. The adverting or attention to it generates the javana process, so it is said. This process repeats itself and runs in several turns till the attention is drawn elsewhere. Our authority does not state the sort of deliberation we are to engage in. We can, however, find some analogy in the learning process to be discussed in the next chapter.

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Analogy of Learning Process

The learning of a kasiṇa, particularly a colour kasiṇa, would appear in this context similar to the learning of a language. The uniform sign of a kasiṇa would serve for a visual language in the same way as the pattern of letters or words presented before the eyes of a silent person would do. The learnt pattern of symbols is forthwith recognized and, when continued, constitutes our significant language, whereas the kasiṇa sign is apparently meaningless. Again, the production of a new pattern out of the learnt letters and words may be orally spoken, manually written, or anyhow presented for own or others' purposes. The production of a kasiṇa, on the other hand, is possible only through the mind alone.

The similarity between the two, kasiṇa and language, should ostensibly encourage us to practise the kasiṇa device, particularly the device of colour kasiṇa. We have to arouse our interest in learning the letters and word. In a similar way, our interest will have to be aroused in learning a kasiṇa sign. The deliberation recommended by our savant is to dwell on its benefits. This would truly maintain our interest in the kasiṇa. The repetition of the name of the kasiṇa may probably be done through its mere concept.

In our day-to-day experience also, we are sometimes called upon to remember a shape, size, and colour. Later on we can easily recognize it, but it is rather difficult to recall it fully. The kasiṇa design is comparatively small in size and uniform in colour. It should not be too difficult for us to learn and recall it later on.

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V

Common Features of Colour Kasiṇa

Single Percept

In the practice on four elemental kasiṇas dealt with in Chapters VIII to XII of the third phase of this research, we were asked by our savant, Buddhaghosa, to concentrate our attention on their supporting elements, viz., earth, water, fire, and air, as the case may be. We were not to observe their colour, nor view their characteristics. The colour is, however, inseparable at least from the first three kasiṇas; for it is dependent upon them. The colour is, therefore, an aid to conceiving the underlying element of these kasiṇas and so is their size, but the colour and size are not the element of the kasiṇa.

Morever, an element is said to be invariably found only in a composition of all these four elements jointly and never singly. What we consider as earth is, to speak correctly, only predominantly earth in its composition and the rest of the elements are also present in that composition. The same thing would apply to other three elements *mutatis mutandis*. Our savant advises us to repeat a word (name) appropriate to the element of the kasiṇa under observation and the practice of concentration.

This stipulation is apparently anomalous; for the repeating of the word or name is not conducive to a trance, which he knew well enough. He could not have done other than this to

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direct our attention to the elemental concept of a kasiṇa alone. His principle of a kasiṇa practice is evidently: "One and only one percept or concept at a time."

But still he has to advise us that we should repeat the name and at the same time not observe the characteristic of the relative element. By such a direction he could not have meant other than that we should grasp the mere concept of the kasiṇa in its elemental property. In short, there was only one thing in the kasiṇa to be observed; it was the concept of the element, while the colour was not to be viewed.

Now on the contrary in the colour kasiṇa he directs us to observe the colour itself and not the underlying object. The word 'characteristic' is also not mentioned. We also miss the conceptual dhamma in the colour kasiṇa. Obviously he must have meant only one thing to be concentrated upon. This is the percept of the colour concerned. He says, of course, that we are to repeat the name of the colour, but it is to serve as a key to recall the colour later on. Although the colour is prepared on same object, the latter is not to be taken into account. We are to observe the colour only and nothing more than that.

Outwardly, it would seem easier than the elemental kasiṇas to practise, but practically it is not so. To many practisers the elemental kasiṇa would be much easier than the colour one, when the question of recall is taken into consideration. We can recall the concept of an element quicker and more easily than the percept of a colour. It might be due to this difficulty that the colour kasiṇa was placed after the elemental one. But the reason is not given wherever these kasiṇas are described.

Although the *Vimutti-magga* mentions one colour as 'blue-green' (pp. 124-125) there are practically only four colours for kasiṇa practice and not more than four. It is strange that a distinctly and expressly green colour is not included in the colour kasiṇa, nor can it be derived from any other authoritative sources, though the colour is so abundant all round in nature. There must have been some particular reason for accepting these four colours only, but unfortunately we do not find any reason explicitly mentioned even in these two works, *Visuddhi-magga* and *Vimutti-magga*. The consistent mention of these four colours might therefore

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convince us that they were practically practised upon and that no colour other than these was added to them later on.

Had these kasiṇas been merely theoretical and never practised upon, we would have found several more colours other than these in addition, even with their various shades and tints. Both the text and the commentary, and even these two works on *Maggas*, would have us practise on these four colour kasiṇas only, and that in kasiṇa as well as in abhibhāyatana. Hence we may fairly conclude that these practices were actually followed during those times.

So in the colour kasiṇa we are concerned with a single percept of the relative colour only. This must make the practice comparatively simple and encouraging, even though we are not habituated to recall a colour. Nevertheless we can recognize it at once, which shows that we learn and retain it in our mind. But our savants want us to learn it well enough to reproduce it vividly in mind later on and then for samādhi.

Prepared Kasina

Unprepared supports for this colour practice can be found easily, but they are not quite suitable to our daily routine. A prepared kasiṇa, as we are told in the *Visuddhi-magga*, should seem handy enough. The choice lies between coloured flowers and coloured objects such as cloth, metal, etc. Outwardly a piece of cloth would seem better than a heap of flowers; but the latter seems to be preferable; for a natural colour visible in or out of a cluster of flowers might help us with a better result later on. So both our savants ask us to prepare a kasiṇa with flowers, though they also give us other alternatives.

The area of such a kasiṇa should correspond to that of the earth kasiṇa; it is to be circular and one foot across; the kasiṇa should be bordered with something different in colour; such an instruction is apparently given for the purpose of making the kasiṇa plainly distinct and also for that of checking the eyes from straying away from the kasiṇa. It is also our daily experience that an object on a broad or large background is plainly seen and marked. On the other hand, the large area lying round about the object is very often overlooked. The kasi a is to be learnt as a whole and recalled as such later on.

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Flowers are mentioned at first; they are to be so arranged that only the particular colour comes to our view; the central part and the stem or stalk, if of different colour, should be removed or covered well with flowers; the receptacle for flowers may or should seemingly be a convenient one, over which they are to be spread. The receptacle is at first to be filled with flowers before they are spread over it; so it is better to select a shallow receptacle; the upper part of it should preferably be round and not less than one foot across. It can also be at first with leaves, or a piece of cloth bound up into it to serve as an inner partition, so that a few handfuls of flowers will suffice to prepare the kasiṇa.

Or, the receptacle may be covered with a piece of cloth of the required colour and so bound up in its month that it presents a surface like that of a drum. In other words, the bound and tight surface is to serve as a colour kasiṇa without flowers. Such a device is apparently convenient for daily practice; but therein we should not pay any attention to the cloth itself. Although this device may serve the purpose of kasiṇa well, it lacks the freshness of flowers. One should compare the impression generated by the two devices.

As an alternative, an article (a metal plate) of appropriate colour (vaṇṇapdhātu) and required size may be used for this kasiṇa. The underlying material (metal) should, however, be not adverted to. The kasiṇa circle may also be drawn and painted on the wall at a convenient height, so that the eyes bend at a comfortable angle. It has already been said that such an angle is about 45° between the line of sight and the vertical height of the eyes. The upper gaze, if the device be too high, will tire the eyes very soon, and even the straight gaze, if the device be directly in front, becomes tiresome in the beginning. If the device be too low and the gaze is downward, drowsiness gradually overpowers the eyes. Hence the device should be placed or made so that the gaze be comfortable.

The portable device can be easily prepared with coloured cloth, metal plate, wooden or thick paper board. Since concentration is made on colour alone, the device may be spread on the ground, hung on some support, or made to stand on two sticks pushed into the ground. In one's own room, a painted

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circle made upon the wall may serve one's purpose. Or, the circle may be prepared on a board and hung on the wall. Although not suggested by our authorities, the device might be fixed within a light frame and covered with a thin, clear glass. The frame may be hung on for use.

Signs of Kasina

The preparatory sign is the physical device of kasiṇa itself. We gaze at it and what we see is termed the preparatory sign. When the process of our learning the device begins, we are trying to grasp the preparatory sign. We gradually lose the sense of its physical property and see it so clearly that, we think, we can recall it. This is the proper time for closing eyes and finding out whether we can recall the sign vividly. The after-image will not look like a physical object of kasiṇa but something like a mental image of the kasiṇa. So we shall be prompted to close the eyes time and again to see if we can remember the device well. It is necessary that we do so. The failure to recall gives us a better challenge to learn the preparatory sign closely.

The method of learning colour kasiṇa signs should rather be adapted to that of, 'trial and error'. The guideline, of course, would be generally the same as described in learning the elemental signs. Whatever be the method, its effectiveness will have to be evaluated by the degree of vividness we can recall in the after-image. Although the method of 'trial and error' is not mentioned as such in the *Visuddhi-magga*, it is tantamount to this method when the author says in the earth kasiṇa: "At times (with the eyes) opened and at times (with the eyes) closed, one should conduct (one's) attention (at the kasiṇa)." Opening eyes, one learns the sign; while closing them, one tries to recall the sign, if the after-image can be produced satisfactorily.

Throughout our life, in fact, we have been learning something or other. Many things are learnt and retained and some of them can even be recalled well enough. We can be, for example, memorizing verses for long and may fail to produce even a stanza correctly. If we do so systematically for a short time, a number of stanzas can be easily remembered and reproduced. The entire *Dhammapada* consisting of 423 stanzas is learnt and reproduced by many monks and lay persons.

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Several suttas in prose, such as Sati-Paṭṭhāna, are learnt by heart and retained well even now. In those early times it is said that only a period of five years was required and enough to learn all the requisite scripture or literature in prose and verse by heart, and to retain it in mind.

Evidently it is comparatively easy to recall what we can read, write, and act in our learning stage. In kasiṇa practice we have no such aids in learning. There are in this device no design, no lines, no figures, and nothing to attract our attention. We have an unvariegated surface before us for learning and concentrating on. This uniformly plain surface apparently increases our difficulty and we have, however, to make it our centre of observation anyhow. Buddhaghosa's exhortation may be interpreted to mean that the kasiṇa is the secret door to great spiritual treasures. It is really so, if we think over its great supernormal potentialities.

The difficulty of producing an after-image seemingly stems from our defective learning habit or method, defective from the yogic viewpoint. Now we are called upon to learn a colour kasiṇa which is neither abnormal nor extraordinary. The preparatory sign of a kasiṇa is quite simple. We become aware of our shortcoming only when we fail to recall it. If we are able even once to recall it anyhow, our confidence will suddenly and favourably grow and the after-image will beign to stabilize in spite of ourselves. Buddhaghosa ascribes our inability to lack of our merit or practice in our previous lives. We cannot blame him for this. For the challenge is there and we should not turn our back to it.

Examples of Colour Percept

The colour kasiṇa is also found in the Abhibhāyatana and the Vimokkha types of higher contemplation found rather frequently in the suttas. These two types are indeed more natural than the artificial kasiṇa. But the commentary and Buddhaghosa are loud and really one in their praise of the kasiṇa; the former might have meant the natural or unprepared device, whereas the latter is definitely on the side of the artificial or prepared device. If the kasiṇa be chosen for practice, the

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device recommended by the latter is well suited for the practice even at present.

In the devotional type of meditation also, the imaginary mental images bear some resemblance to the kasiṇa. If piety and emotion be set aside, the latter will appear better and productive of more potentialities. From the yogic standard also, the kasiṇa will prove of more practical value than the former. For the uniform co'our design of a small size will be more preferable in our practice than images of variegated colour and ornaments of varying sizes, which might present much more difficulty in learning and producing the after-image.

In dreams we sometimes see plants, trees, flowers, and other things as colourful as in nature. This must have been due to the retentive power present in us. This production of colour in dream must assure us of the possibility of organizing it even in our waking state. The habit of thinking in words rather than in percept and concept has probably enfeebled our capacity to learn and recall colours.

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VI

Practice of Blue Kasiṇa

Secrecy of Practice

EVEN A minor practice of yoga is kept secret. We may resent this sort of tendency in the yogic tradition. Sooner or later we shall have to accept that the tradition must have originated from the sheer need of unhampered practice. For in the preliminary stage of practice, an unfavourable remark from the people might cause discouragement to the practiser. In slightly higher stages, the fame of some achievement in yoga may attract inquisitive persons around him that might upset the regular programme needed for the development of yoga.

Moreover, the secrecy would protect the yogin from several undesirable complications. The principle of this tradition seems to be valid even at present. In Buddhistic practice on kasiṇa, some sort of secluded place for resort is indicative of secrecy, although our savant does not mention this sort of tradition. But there are a few instances when the disclosure of arhatship with supernormal power necessitated the liberated bhikkhu to resort immediately to a remote place in the Himalayas. The Pacceka-Buddhas are found to be secretive by nature and habit. They seldom display their supernormal power.

Preparation of Blue Kasiṇa

The preparation of a kasiṇa device is fully given in the fourth

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chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, and likewise derscribed in the chapter entitled 'Meditation on Earth kasiṇa' in the first phase of this re search. In the preparation of the rest of kasiṇas, Buddhaghosa generally refers to it. It should be borne in mind that the design of the kasiṇa as regards size, position, uniformity of the kasiṇa surface, and other allied instructions would be similar, but not the particular details appropriate to the kasiṇa under practice.

A colour kasiṇa is quite different from the elemental kasiṇas in some particular instructions. In the former Buddhaghosa asks us underlying substance, such as earth, water, etc., in mind (manasikāra), and not to mark the colour of the kasiṇa design. But in the latter he advises us to gaze directly at the colour of the kasiṇa design, and not to take in mind the underlying substance. This is so because the former is organized for the element, while the latter is done for the colour.

In the Bhāvanā-vidhāna (method of contemplation), of the earth kasiṇa, Buddhaghosa has quoted the authority for his general instructions from some old commentary. He gives these instructions preceded by the phrase—"vuttan hetam" meaning 'for this is said'. The sub-commentator, Dhammapāla, has supplied it with the relative reference as "in the old commentary". Later he has done so with—"(as in the manner) of the text of the commentary shown (above)". Again he has done so as "in the same text of the commentary". So it is clear that Buddhaghosa has been explaining the set instructions of some old commentary with the addition of his own suggestions.

It is imaginable that he should have done so, even if he was exposing his own method of organization under the aegis of the old authority acknowledged in the tradition he belonged to. The authority, however, is not that of the original text; it is the tradition accepted by the particular sect of the Theravāda; the author of the *Vimutti-magga* also does the same thing without giving us the name of the sect he is representing. We are not, however, quite sure of the opinion expressed by some present writers that the elder Dhammapāla was aware of the said old commentary and even had the book before him. This opinion is obviously based on the sub-comment cited above, but the mere mention of the old commentary by him is not conclusive.

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The old commentary under discussion does not seem to have been an integral portion of the regular commentaries of the principal Nikāyas. Most probably the different sects of Theravāda had an authoritative book of instructions in the form of a commentary. The *Visuddhi-magga* and the *Vimutti-magga* were probably the enlarged version of this sort of old authority, so far as the descriptions of the main devices are concerned.

The short instruction of the said old commentary on the earth kasiṇa is as follows: "Learning the earth kasiṇa, one grasps the sign in earth prepared or unprepared, limited not unlimited, terminated not unterminated, encircled not encircled, ended not unended, suppa (bushel) sized or sarāva (saucer) sized." Buddhaghosa enlarges this cryptic passage into his extended method of artificial kasiṇa design and guidance. The old tradition is clearly discernible therein. So we are to depend on our savant that he is backed for what he says by the traditional authority.

So Buddhaghosa has tried to expose the import of the practice upon the "unprepared earth" as:

> "Therein, in the case of a person who having joined the order of monks or renounced as an Isi (hermit) had obtained the four or five Jhānas (form trances) on the earth kasiṇa previously in the past birth (existence) also, this kind of meritorious person endowed with this merited back-ground gets the sign produced on the unprepared earth . . ."

The sub-commentator explains that meritorious one means possessed of merit through contemplation (bhāvanā). It means that the unprepared kasiṇa is enough for a merited person and the prepared kasiṇa is to be used by all other persons. Nevertheless, the unprepared kasiṇa is not kept away from us, as we are all recommended in the Abhibhāyatana type of meditation to meditate on the natural colours.

Buddhaghosa has recommended mainly two types of kasi a design, portable (samhārimam) or fixed in one place (tatraṭṭhakam). Each has its own individual usefulness and convenience. Both types may be used at present. These general instructions are equally applicable to all the devices elemental or of colour.

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Now on this blue kasiṇa, Buddhaghosa in the fifth chapter of his said work says:

> Thereafter (after the air kasiṇa) again one learning the Blue (nīla) kasiṇa grasps the sign in the blue colour, in the flower, or in the cloth, or in the Vaṇṇa-dhātu, as it is said (in the old commentary). One who has merited back-ground and is therefore meritorious gets the sign in that sort of colour in the flower-bush, or the flowers spread upon the altar (couch) of worship, or anyone of blue clothes and gems produced as he sees it.

The word 'vaṇṇa-dhātu' means, according to the sub-commentary, añjana (ointment), rāji (streak or line), vaṭṭa (disc), etc. The context shows that it indicates ornaments or coloured plates of metal. The chances of obtaining the sign in any one of the unprepared devices are not seemingly poor. Some of us might like to organize the unprepared natural kasiṇa rather than the artificial one. The purpose should not, however, be forgotten; it is to get the after-image that we use the uniform design; we were given the artificial one in order to make the learning easy and narrowed.

For those who are not merited, or rather for all of us, he proposes his favourite method of the artificial device as follows:

> Others should take the blue lotus, (blue) Girikaṇṇikā, etc., flowers and with their leaves alone spread and fill up to the brim of tray or a basket, so that the stamen or the stalk is not visible. Or, he should bind the container with blue-coloured cloth and fill it up (with blue flowers). Or, he should bind the upper edge of the container like the surface of a drum (with blue cloth). Or, by means of any one of the bronze-blue, or leaf-blue, or ointment-blue elements, he should make the kasiṇa circle on the portable appliance as described in the earth kasiṇa; or (he should make) a kasiṇa circle on the wall and separate it with a different colour.
> The purpose is to present a blue surface before the eyes.

He says further:

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Then he should continue the mental flow repeating, as told in the earth kasiṇa, Blue, Blue. Here also the defect of kasiṇa is seen in the after-image (uggaha-nimitta); there arise (in the after-image) the image of stamen, stalk, and the gap between the leaves. The counter-part sign (paṭibhāga-nimitta) appears like a fan made of (blue) gems in the sky, freed from the kasiṇa circle (of the after-image). The rest should be known as already stated.

This short passage tells us the general procedure of other colour kasiṇas also.

Upatissa's Instruction

After stating that the practised yogin grasps the sign in a (non) prepared place or in a natural place, Upatissa goes on to give us the general procedure of this blue kasiṇa:

A new yogin is different. He grasps the sign in a prepared place. He is not able to grasp it in an unprepared place. This yogin makes a maṇḍala on a cloth, plank or wall with blue of the colour of the Asita flower, in the form of a triangle or a square. He edges it round with another colour. Thus he prepares the blue-green sign. . ." (p. 124-125 under the section "The Blue Green Sign")

In the section "On Making a Maṇḍala" of the Earth Kasiṇa, he says: "According to the principal teacher's instructions, a circle is the best. The maṇḍala may be made on cloth, on a wall. But it is best on the ground. This is the teaching of predecessor teachers." (p. 73) This applies to all the kasiṇas by his reference. Evidently he follows a different tradition not only from that of the *Visuddhi-magga*, but also from the old commentary followed by Buddhaghosa; as otherwise he would not have given the form of a triangle or a square for making a maṇḍala.

Something will have to be said about the colour of 'blue-green'. The P.T.S. Pāli-English Dictionary under the word 'Nīla' (p. 376),gives its meaning as "dark-blue, blue-black, blue-green. . . . (nīla)—kasiṇa the "blue" kasiṇa. . ." Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli writes under the 'Blue Kasiṇa' at the foot-note on

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p. 179 the *Path of Purification*: "The one Pāli word 'nīla' has to serve for the English blue, green, and sometimes black." But the kasiṇa must remain 'blue' only and never blue-green.

Appearance of Blue Sign

There are three signs to be reckoned with herein as in other kasiṇas. The physical device of the kasiṇa is the preparatory sign, with which we start the practice. The sign is the appearance of the design itself. The gazing at it is the means of internalizing the blue colour in the mind. This is called the learning of the sign. The purpose of learning it is to recall it later perfectly. This is the learnt sign or after-image. After its appearance, the yogin must keep it well on the mental field. Sooner or later a counterpart sign will appear on this after-image, much more phenomenal than the after-image. This counterpart sign is actually the product of the access or pre-samādhi; so it would appear as something in space risen from the after-image and quite separate and free from it. Buddhaghosa assures us that the form trance for a moment or two (in each javana cycle) will appear in it. The internalization of the 'blue' will thus in course of time appear, through the counterpart sign, as the externalized form. This would mean a sort of supernormal phenomenon to us.

A Sadhu's Version of Blue Perception

Long ago I once met a hermit in the Terai of Nepal. He used to live in the open air and sit on the same spot as long as I saw him. It might have been about a week. He kept a dhuni (fire) of fuel most of the time. He wore only a kaupina, or a strip of loin cloth. He was about forty-five years age. He appeared to be like a Vairāgi Sādhu, but I never inquired this of him. I learned casually from him that he had just completed a round of twelve years' penance in constant standing up. I thought the penance of this inconvenience to be ill-adapted to yoga and philosophical thinking. I did not push the matter further.

After a few days he started towards the Gandak river, a distance of about twenty-five miles on foot to the east. I was present there and followed him. When we were alone, I inquired him of the benefit of the penance he had undertaken for so

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long. He said: "Well, Bhakta! (Devotee) This penance clarified the entire blood three times during the period. Now when I sit in meditation, I see a dome of sky-blue like a blue lotus within the head." This sort of azure sky experience in the upper centre within the brain is held in yogic circle to be difficult and productive of tranquil samādhi. This is obviously a case of blue mental field obtained independently. I believe, he told me what he experienced. I never saw him again and he did not ask anything from me. So the blue kasiṇa is possible even now.

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VII

Practice of Yellow Kasiṇa

Preparation of Yellow Device

THE COLOUR of the Buddha's body is said to be yellow, of golden colour. There are also plenty of yellow flowers in nature. Hence this colour has an emotional value as well. The preparation of this is not different from that of the blue kasiṇa. What has been said of the blue kasiṇa will have to be said of this kasiṇa also. It would seem a mere repetition of the kasiṇa already treated of; but the usefulness of a separate treatment of kasiṇas will be plain and patent as we proceed with it.

Buddhaghosa says:

> It is said (in the old commentary): Learning the yellow kasiṇa, one grasps the sign in the yellow colour, in the flower, or in the cloth, or in the Vaṇṇa-dhātu, etc.; hence here also the sign appears to one who has merited background and is meritorious in that sort of colour in the flower-bush, or the flower spread upon the altar of worship, or any one of the yellow cloths and elements as soon as he sees it, like to the elder Cittagutta. To this Elder, it is heard, the sign appeared as large as the alter in the mountain of Cittala, as soon as he saw the worship of the Seat, with Pataṅga (yellow) flowers.

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Others should prepare the kasiṇa with the Kaṇikāra flower, etc., or with yellow cloth, or with element, as described in the Blue kasiṇa. Then he should keep on repeating 'Yellow, Yellow' in the mind. The rest is like the above. This is what we have to do in this kasiṇa.

Yellow Sign in Vimutti-magga

We gaze at the device to learn the sign in it. With the eyes closed we try to recall the sign; we can do so even with the eyes open. Sometimes it is even easier to recall an object with the eyes open than when they are shut. It is because the natural position of the eyes helps us in concentrating the mind more than when we have to apply a little force to the eyes for shutting them.

The counterpart sign is something quite different from the after-image. It is said to arise out of the learnt sign, but in reality it is, so to say, the conceptual part of the latter. For the same reason it is said to be clear off the kasiṇa defects. Evidently, this sign is not to be expected to appear as soon as the after-image does. It must, however, appear sooner or later after the latter. But, when it does, it will seem to be sudden, surprising, and unexpected; for any conception, when visualized, would look so. In the Vimokkha type of contemplation, the colour kasiṇa is included in the third stage of this type.

On the benefits of this type of meditation, Upatissa in his work says:

> There are five distinctive benefits. . . A man is able to attain to the emancipation of the beautiful. He acquires the position of the mastery of the yellow. He considers various yellow colours similar to that of the Kaṇikāra flower. Practising the yellow kasiṇa, he sees yellow everywhere. (P. 125)

Further on he says:

> That yogin sees the yellow colour of yellow flowers or yellow cloths anywhere. He sees it always, in pleasure or in pain. Thus the after-image of yellow occurs to him. . . He follows what is expedient in the practice of the yellow kasiṇa. This

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yogin makes a maṇḍala with yellow of the colour of the Kaṇikāra flower, on cloth, plank or wall, in the shape of a triangle, or square. He edges it with another colour. Thus he prepares the yellow sign. He grasps the sign through three ways: even gazing, skilfulness and the elimination of disturbance. (pp. 125-126)

Comparison and Contrast

It is to be noticed here that the after-image mentioned in the *Vimutti-magga* is apparently equivalent to both the learnt (uggaha) sign (nimitta) and the counterpart (paṭibhāga) sign described in the *Visuddhi-magga*. Moreover, the author of the former work apparently mixes up the ideas of the three types of meditative practices, viz., kasiṇa, abhibhāyatana (overpowering meditative grasp), and vimokkha (strong meditative inclination). Consequently we do not get any clear idea of kasiṇa alone in his treatment of kasiṇa practice. With these exceptions, the method of kasiṇa is almost the same in both these two works. Nevertheless the author of the latter work, the *Visuddhi-magga*, gives us a clear description of kasiṇa and, in doing so, rather ignores the remaining two practices, which are regularly and seriously taken up in the relative suttas of the text.

In the commentary, however, the kasiṇa practice seems to have superseded the two types. The reason for giving preference to kasiṇa might have been the development of its artificial devices later on. Although not mentioned in suttas, these devices are well graduated and earnestly treated of in his work by Buddhaghosa. The correspondence of these devices in the two independent works written by two separately situated and different authors shows that these artificial devices must have been in great vogue among the clergy of those early times. There is no reason why we should not revive and introduce them among the laity as well.

At any rate this kasiṇa method even now can scarcely be brushed aside or discredited without being given a fair trial through practice. This practice might have carried no weight or importance, or if it had not borne the stamp of Buddhistic yoga. The confidence in and insistence on this device, as found

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in the commentary, must have been generated by a long tradition of actual practice. Even if the tradition is a record of mere legends, both the savants have given us a wonderfully graduated course of instructions to realize and achieve them as much as we can. Their source of interpreting these legends was evidently the old commentaries not available currently. Hence their legends present a challenge to us at least in real earnest.

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VIII

Practice of Red Kasiṇa

Red Device

WITH THE full description of the preceding two devices given in the previous sections, the preparation of the device for a red kasiṇa should not present any difficulty. The procedure is the same as found in the description of the blue kasina. The order of sequence usually found in the three colour kasiṇas is blue, yellow, and red. No reason is given for this sequence. But in the manifestation of the Master's operation in miracles, the blue phenomena is said, in the commentary, to have been initially employed to warn the people concerned and to alert them for the immediately following miracle.

This very sequence is found in the Abhibhāyatana type of meditation as well. The blue colour is symbolically equivalent to the black colour or dark or sky colour. But blackness or darkness is not mentioned as an object for meditation. So the blue colour should have been easier to learn and to recall the other two colours. Nevertheless, it should depend on the nature and capacity of the novice or learner as to which of the three would be more quickly learnt and remembered by him. The successful learning of one colour kasiṇa should, of course, facilitate the learning of the other two colour kasiaṇs also.

The preparation of this colour kasina is similar to that of the blue and yellow kasiṇas. Buddhaghosa says:

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In the Red (Lohita) Kasiṇa also it is the same (process) as said in the blue and yellow kasiṇas. For it is said: 'Learning the Red Kasiṇa, one grasps the (red) sign in the red flower, or cloth, or coloured element (Vaṇṇadhātu). Hence herein also one who possesses the merit of the former meritorious action obtains that sort of (red) sign as soon as he sees the (red) bush and garland of Bandhujivaka flowers, etc., or flowers spread out, or anyone of red cloth, gem, metals and elements.

The source Buddhaghosa quotes from is not traceable. The sub-commentary, however, commenting on the short mention as "Vuttanhetam" (vuttan-hi-etam: for it is said) in the Bhāvanā-vidhāna section of the earth kasiṇa (Chapter IV), says: "It is said in the Porapa Aṭṭhakathā" (old commentary). The term 'Porapa' might have been general or particular. In both the cases the term indicates the existence of rather detailed literature on practices of kammaṭṭhānas or devices. This literature might have been also compiled or composed in versions more than one. The evidence of these versions may be inferred from quotations, long or short, of these two extant works. Moreover Dhammapāla might or might not have had an access to this old literature; for we do not find him quoting passages directly from it.

The Pāli word, 'vaṇṇa-dhātu,' is used in connection with each of the four colour kasiṇas. This word is explained as 'añjana-rajivaṭṭādi' in the sub-commentary. The literal meaning of this word is 'paint, streak, disk.' The customary meaning would be 'beauty materials.' The meaning given in the sub-commentary indicates several things such as eye-lid paint, ornamental streak, disc, etc. In the context of colour kasiṇa, however, the symbolic meaning of a metal or a metal plate coloured blue, yellow, red, or white, seems to be appropriate herein. So far as flowers are concerned, there are varieties of flowers of blue, yellow, red, and white colours abundant in nature. And any flower of the required colour would serve the purpose.

It is to be noticed here that in a colour kasiṇa we are concerned with colour alone. We have nothing to do with the concept

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of the underlying element as in the elemental kasiṇas. Hence the principle of colour kasiṇa is in a way favourable to the organization of 'form trance,' with a fundamental difference of course. In organizing form trance as already mentioned, we do not gaze directly or intentionally at anything inside or outside. The external objects in this trance would appear, in the preparatory stage, as if in a pattern of visible objects before our eyes; but we do not pay any attention to these objects; their appearance is ignored by us. This mental disposition gradually tends to the emergence of the said first jhāna, the first stage of the form trance, fully dealt with in the first phase of this research.

In the colour kasiṇa, on the other hand, the form trance has been said to appear momentarily upon the counterpart sign. This sign is conceptual and independent of active contemplation. We do not know when and how the sign would appear as stated by Buddhaghosa so assuringly in the earth kasiṇa. But the sign must sooner or later assume the form trance for one or lwo mental moments at first. We are not to be discouraged by or at the stipulation of mental moments. The cognitive process is, in Buddhist psychology, seemingly natural. Any perception or conception is said to be ever intermittent and never continuous. The best we can do is to conduct a javana circle as long as we are desirous of continuing a particular percept or concept in the cognitive process.

This fundamental difference between the two modes of meditation as stated above should not be lost sight of. For the gradual trances are the real marvels of the Master's system of meditation. The diversion in any other fields of supernormal power is, so to say, extraneous to the organization of meditative Nibbāna, a state of complete mindlessness, but probably fully alive, alert, unaccountably conscious. There are reasons for the last provision, to be dealt with in our later phases. The method of discriminatory deliberation and review to realize the liberative Nibbāna lies within the precincts of Buddhist insight to be discussed in the later phases of this research.

To resume the subject, Buddhaghosa says further on: "Others (except the meritorious ones) should prepare the kasiṇa in the

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same manner as said in the Blue Kasiṇa through (the means of) Jayasumana, Bandhujīvaka, Ratta (red) Koraṇḍa (flowers) etc., or red cloth, or metal. They should then start and continue thinking (on the kasiṇa, repeating) 'Red, Red' (Lohitam, Lohitam). The rest is likewise" (as described in the blue and yellow kasiṇas). Even in the commentary we do not find instances of red kasiṇa being exclusively utilized in producing red colour.

Instances of blue colour, however, are found on occasions for producing dark expanse by the Master. Nevertheless the practice of this kasiṇa might enable one, besides other things, to discern the blood of the heart and try thereby whether the disposition of others' mind could be known or inferred. Although a little bit strange, the topic has been dealt with in the works of our savants in connection with the mind-to-mind knowledge; the topic will be discussed later on.

Red Sign in Vimutti-magga

Upatissa describes all the four colour kasiṇas in a like manner. He has adopted the method of exposition through typical questions and detailed answers to them. This method is also followed in the *Visuddhi-magga*. Without resorting to the questions, the descriptions of the red kasiṇa as given in the answers and found in the *Vimutti-magga* are briefly given below:

> There are four distinctive benefits. A man is able to attain the emancipation of the beautiful in the red kasiṇa. He acquires the position of mastery of the red. He is able to change things into the colour of red. The other benefits are equal to those taught under the earth kasiṇa. He who practises the red kasiṇa sees the colour of red prevailing everywhere.

The emancipation of the beatiful refers to the third stage of the vimokkha. This is briefly mentioned in the Pakiṇṇaka (Miscellany) Kathā of the 5th part of his work by Buddhaghosa covering almost all the benefits stated above: "Through the

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means of the red kasiṇa, the creation of red forms, the attainment of Abhibhāyatana (mastery) and of Subha-vimokkha (emancipation of the beautiful) etc., are accomplished." Ostensibly the two works are nearly similar in the treatment of the principal topics.

Upatissa says further on on the manner of grasping the sign: "The paractised yogin grasps the sign in a natural place, i.e., on seeing red flowers or red clothes anywhere. He sees always, in pleasure or in pain. Thus the after-image of the red sign occurs to him." This is said of the practised yogin. But, when we compare the passages in the two works, we rightly think that 'the practised yogin' herein must mean 'the meritorious ones' in the *Visuddhi-magga*. As otherwise, the sentence would be obscure in its purport:

Our author continues;

> "The new yogin is different. The new yogin grasps the sign in a prepared place, and is not able to do so in a non-prepared place. He follows what is expedient in the practice of the red kasiṇa. The yogin applies a red colour resembling that of the Bandhujivaka flower on cloth, plank or wall, in the shape of a triangle or a square. Or, he makes a maṇḍala of red flowers. He edges it with another colour. Thus he prepares the red sign. The rest is as was fully taught before. (pp. 126 and 127)

The quotation given above shows that the passage would be clear only if the corresponding passage from the *Visuddhi-magga* be also taken into consideration. The 'new yogin' herein must really mean the ordinary person who has no previous practice as referred to by Buddhaghosa. Both the savants, however, say the same thing. The merited one will have no difficulty in organizing the kasiṇa even in a natural place; it is the unmerited, or previously unpractised, person or beginner, or new yogin who has to follow the preliminary instructions of the artificial kasiṇa; our savants are thus of the same opinion.

This sort of opinion is subject to close scrutiny from the practical point of view. For the so-called merit gained through

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practice or otherwise in a previous life is unknown, unpredictable, and even inoperable before the manifestation of its outcome in this our present life. The past merit is a vipāka or fruition; the vipāka as such is neutral, inert, and incapable of producing any further fruit; hence the past merit however much its excellence, can scarcely be enviable so far as the present achievement is concerned. In short, it cannot alone move us along the path of kasiṇa practice any further, in spite of whatever our savants plead in favour of it.

It is, therefore, the present practice that will count in any yogic enterprise and is sure to bear fruit in this very life as we find in the text. Regarding the benefits of kasiṇa practice, we may add something more than what the two works have enumerated. To wit, we may cultivate the taste for giving colour to our imagination; we may through this paractice notice a distinct tint or colour in the pattern of things or places, and even in the eventful scenes; the keenness cultivated might greatly help us observe things closely and unforgettably.

If Upatissa is truly stating the real experience of this kasiṇa practised by himself, the colour of the heart-blood might be seen through this practice. This would lead us to the preliminary course of mind-to-mind knowledge. We may doubt this sort of correlation between the colour of the blood and the disposition of the mind. The yogic practice, however, is productive of wonderful experience. When a serious writer like this Elder Upatissa has thought it worth-while to include the device in his work, we cannot take it as a mere mythical article of blind faith.

We should not forget that the topic of kammaṭṭhāna is regarded as something sacred, earnest, and not to be trifled with. No sādhu would ever think of deceiving a disciple or a novice by giving him a counterfeit sādhana or yogic device knowingly. During the time of the Master the usual device given to a convert at the time of his first initiation seems to be the taca-pañcaka, or the group of five (of the hair head of the body, nail, teeth, and skin) ending with the taca or skin. The commentary on the Mahāparinibbāna sutta (*Dīgha* II.3) says that the last convert, Subhadda, was initiated in the Order

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with this "kammaṭṭhānan" by Ānanda. This is the first five of the thirty-two bodily elements. Superficially the device might look a trifle, but it is one of the most important devices for realizing Buddhistic truth.

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IX

Practice of White Kasiṇa

White Device

WE MIGHT wonder at the order of colour kasiṇas. The order is invariably the same from the blue to the white. Not only in the colour kasiṇa, but also in the Abhibhāyatana of colour, the order of colour is the same. No explanation of this order is given in the text and the commentary. The order of elemental kasiṇas is understandable as it is from gross to subtle, but no such distinction is observable in colour. The order of colour is the same as found in the descriptive passages regarding the colourful visage, ornaments, dress, chariots, etc., such as those of Licchavis who came to visit the Master in Vesāli (Mahāparinibbāna sutta).

The order of devices in colour should probably mean their graduation also. We have indeed instances of exceptions too. These are the Elder Cūḷapanthaka who started the practice on a rag of cloth; the rag was probably white. Several nuns are said to have started the practice by gazing at the burning wick of a lamp; this device should have come up only after the first two kasiṇas, earth and water. The order was not probably observed rigidly in the kasiṇas inasmuch as the Master is known to have taught a device most appropriate to his disciple. It might have been ostensibly due to the Carita (Chapter III) of the *Visuddhi-magga* and the Behaviour (Chapter

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VI) of the *Vimutti-magga* (pp. 57-61), which would suggest different devices for different persons.

Nevertheless we shall do well to follow the order of practices as found in these two works, which is the same in the text. The same order has been kept up in the phases of this research also. Even if the individual idiosyncrasy might suggest a little change in the kammaṭṭhāna as a whole, the colour kasiṇa would not admit of any change; for the four colour kasiṇas are not broken up even for individual dispositions.

Both the savants are of the same opinion as regards these colour kasiṇas; these are said to be appropriate to persons who are 'dosa-carita' (in the *Visuddhi-magga*) or 'a walker in hate' (in the *Vimutti-magga*). The latter gives us in addition a following clause : "And again, a walker in intelligence is not debarred from working at any subject of meditation." (p. 69) The last provision is definitely favourable to intelligent novices. In reality an intelligent person can find interest in anyone of the forty devices by thinking on the benefit of these devices individually or collectively.

Since we are habituated to do our works on white goods and materials, this kasiṇa might be much easier to learn and recollect. The practice on this kasiṇa may even facilitate the light (āloka) kasiṇa, the most important of the kasiṇas. This white kasiṇa is however not different from other colour kasiṇas. The uniformity of kasiṇa practice might have been one of the causes of its going out of use or sādhanā. The simple logic of the uniformity could not evidently plead its yogic usefulness and importance before men of philosophical and devotional temperament and inclination. There is no reason why we should not revive it among the laity and would-be yogins.

The device is very simple. Anything presenting a white surface to our eyes may be presumably selected for this purpose. The size of the kasiṇa would however be the usual one, one foot across the kasiṇa design; the circular design is to be demarcated by a bold border of a grey or dull colour. The purpose of demarcation is to help our attention to be concentrated on the design only and keep it from straying outside the border line. The grey or dull colour for the border is

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preferable to other colours in order to make the white colour more prominent than that of the border.

The attention to the white device might be maintained longer than to other colour devices owing to its frequent use and association with our daily work. It should not be forgotten that the gazing of the kasiṇa is to learn it vividly; the learning of the kasiṇa is for its recalling effectively later on. And the recalling is meant for its maintenance till the counterpart sign appears as described by our savant, Buddhaghosa. The counterpart sign should not be imagined beforehand; it must appear sooner or later.

Any failure to remember the sign would be a challenge to our competence; this sort of spirit might be a way to intensify the endeavour in learning the design more and more closely. The trial and error method of learning and remembering would be very serviceable in this kasiṇa as in other yogic practices. This method is not by itself an independent device, but it may effectively enable us to adjust our own endeavour to the challenge before us. This method may also create a sort of confidence in us.

The importance of the white device lies in the fact that this device is akin to that of the light kasiṇa. For we shall see in the latter device that the dull glow of the light is selected for practice rather than a strong light. Hence the two kasiṇas will have some sort of resemblance to each other. Moreover, this is the last of the four colour kasiṇas, but not the least. If we fail to organize this kasiṇa successfully, it would be obviously strange and even unnatural. So this kasiṇa should be practised well.

Buddhaghosa's Method

In such a fundamental yogic practice as the kasiṇa, we should be able to distinguish between the differences of the methods available to us. Presently we have a ready access to the methods found in the regular text ascribed to the Master or to the textual authority; the method given in the commentary or traceable to it; the method described in the *Visuddhi-magga* by Buddhaghosa; the method given in the English translation of the so-called *Vimutti-magga* by a certain monk

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named Upatissa. These methods are not identical; they should be studied separately wherever possible; their close study may certainly bear some fruit of practical value.

It is for the reason given above that we are presenting the different methods separately. But it should not be forgotten that the experience of practical yogins in particular yogic practices will count more than the rules and the stipulations of some authorities, however great and prestigious. So we would have liked our savant give us his own or others' practical experience much more than the sort of stereotyped passages he quotes from some untraceable old authority. The reliable, traceable, and indubitable method makes us stick to it unwaveringly for many a trial till something comes out of it. This is the main point our savant appears to be harping on in these important Kammaṭṭhānas.

Thus in dealing with the remaining (sesa) kasiṇas in the 5th chapter of his work, Buddhaghosa treats of the white (odāta) kasiṇa in a separate short section. Although the treatment of this kasiṇa is brief therein, he has referred it backward so that we have to go over all the descriptions in connection with the earth kasiṇa, the most detailed of all the sections on this practice. In the beginning of this 5th chapter, he has given us a general instruction thus:

> "Now after the earth kasiṇa there begins the detailed story (kathā) of the water kasiṇa. As it is in the case of the earth kasiṇa, so it is in the case of the water kasiṇa also . . . all the details should be repeated (herein). As it is herein, so (it is) everywhere (in the successive kasiṇas). For hereafter without saying even this much we shall say what is particular (to the kasiṇa concerned) only.

The repetition would entail all the details given in the earth kasiṇa.

But the skipping over of the details might make us lose sight of the importance of the particular kasiṇa. For this white kasiṇa, as stated above in the preceding section, has been mentioned as one of the three kasiṇas in organizing the light

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kasiṇa and the supernormal sight (dibba-cakkhu) also, which is treated of by him in the 13th chapter of his work.

Savants often skip over minor (in their eyes) details in their works; but what is minor in their eyes often proves a great hurdle to us; we sometimes find it difficult to fill the gap left by them with cryptic words. The full descriptions will have to be supplied anyhow by us, either by referring them backward, or writing them in full, or remembering them one by one. The best course left to a writer would presumably be to give the important passages wherever they might be necessary; this course has been followed in this research as judiciously as my little and unsophisticated competence could decide at the time.

Instead of curtailing the details so much as he has ostensibly done, we would have liked him to give us the full details from the old sources he had before him. He, however, says briefly thus:

> "In the white kasiṇa also when one learns the white (odāta) kasiṇa, one grasps the sign in the white of flower, or cloth, or vaṇṇa-dhātu (white-coloured materials), so it is said. In the case of one who has the back-ground (in one's previous life or existence) and is merited, the sign arises when looking at the similar flower-plant or flower-couch (altar) of Vassika-sumana, or the heap of white lotuses or lilies, or the circular disks (maṇḍalas) of lead, silver, and the moon too.

The merited person, as we have already discussed is thought to be one who has earned anyhow appropriate merit in previous lives. This sort of former merit-complex is widespread in the religious world, and much more so in the Buddhistic one. This may be true, but it is surely unpredictable as to its occurrence. As such it is certainly far better to leave it alone, than to harp on it so often (by our savants in their works). For they are unable to point out the merited from among the class of novices till they would see the surprising feat of success in one of them.

Although any quick learning of a yogic device is, to an

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Oriental mind, the fruit or background of former merit, this sort of mental complex would be fundamentally unfavourable to yogic practice and its continuance. The Master has never contributed to this sort of ideology. He is said to have accomplished the eight trances and obtained the five branches of supernormal knowledge at least ten times under ten former Buddhas. But this past achievement did not help him to obtain these without their proper organization after six years' austerities. He has declared that what he obtained was his own discovery due to his endeavour done during the current life of the Śākyamuni. This should be our beacon light also.

To resume the subject, Buddhaghosa says further:

> "In the case of others (than the merited), they (the unmerited) are to prepare the (white) kasiṇa, as already said, with white flowers, or white cloth, or (white) coloured materials, or by the means mentioned in the blue kasiṇa; and then (they are) to maintain the mental grasp by repeating: 'white, white.' The rest (of the instructions) are the same as indicated in the earth kasiṇa).

The picture of the above instructions may be seen as follows:

If one is merited, one may start the practice on unprepared device. If one be unmerited, one must start the practice only on a prepared device. In both the cases one will have to gaze at the white object and to learn the sign well enough to be able to reproduce it at the time of meditation. The counterpart sign may appear sooner or later on the after-image in both these cases. Our savant says that the merited get the counterpart sign very soon. This should not discourage any one of us; for if the learning of the design is well conducted, the after-image will not fail to appear in the mind. It is surely on the after-image that the countrepart sign is said to appear as if suddenly and unexpectedly.

So the question of merit or non-merit arises only at the stage of the appearance of the counterpart sign; for the latter does not depend presumably on endeavour alone; this is probably the main shortcoming of the kasṇia practice, due to the need of gazing intently at the design, as contrasted with

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the direct device of the Master in organizing the four form trances. Nevertheless our savant must be right when he says that the counterpart sign arises on the learnt sign, as it naturally should. At any rate, when the process of organizing this device is correct, the counterpart sign must also be correct, for the learnt sign is our everyday experience.

Upatissa's Method

The translation of *Vimutti-magga* into any language, without the original in Pāli or Sanskrit or Prākrit, would not have carried any authoritative value, so far as the Buddhist yoga is concerned, if the chance mention of the name of the said work and its author had not been made by the Elder Dhammapāla, the sub-commentator of the *Visuddhi-magga*. Buddhaghosa has not mentioned the name; he has quoted the requisite passage and showed its shortcoming, but abstained from openly giving out the name of the work and its author.

This sort of polite practice is generally observable in the authors of serious works in Sanskrit and Pāli; they quote the needed passage and criticize it, leaving the reader to guess whose passage is being challenged. It is, of course, the sub-commentator's or the annotator's task to supply the name anyhow. So it was done by the Elder, who has thus rendered a great service to the lost work in the original and thereby helped the translation of the said work to carry weight as any translation might be expected to do.

The word that occasioned the chance mention of the name of the author and his work is as mentioned above, what Buddhaghosa says, in the description of the 'cariyā' or disposition in the third chapter of his work. The word is : "ekacce vadanti" or some say. On this word the sub-commentator comments : "Ekacce ti—this is said of the Elder Upatissa; for he has said so in the *Vimutti-magga*". And he further says that the word 'kira' used by Buddhaghosa in this connection is indicative of dislike (aruci).

The full discussion on the identity of the author, Upatissa, is given in the Introduction to *The Path of Freedom* (*Vimutti-magga*) (1961). Some discussion is also found under 'The Vimutti-magga' in the Introduction to the Path of Purification

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(*Visuddhi-magga*) (1956). From the former discussion we learn that there was a work in Chinese called *Cie-to-tão-lun*. It is also called *Gedatsu Dö Ron*. Prof. Nanjio has rendered the title of this work in Sanskrit as *Vimokṣa-Mārga*, the author being Arahant Upatissa. (page XXXVI).

The word, Vimokṣa-mārga, might be rightly translated into Pāli as Vimutti-magga; but the Sanskrit word, Vimokṣa, will generally be turned into Vimokkha, and vice versa. In *The Life of Tipiṭaka Saṅghapāla Thera of Funan* it is mentioned that "He was foreign scholar . . . He translated the Mahā Aśoka Sūtra, Vimokṣa-Mārga-Sāstra, and others . . . His translations amounted to eleven cases of forty-eight fascicles. They are the great Aśoka sūtra, the Vimokṣa-Mārga-Sāstra and others . . . Now on the title page of *The Path of Freedom* it is indicated that the work was "Translated into Chinese (Gedatsu Dö Ron) by Tipiṭaka Saṅghapāla of Funan."

The latter discussion is comparatively moderate and reasonable. The evidence is obviously incomplete to justify the conclusion that the Sanskrit work, *Vimokṣa-Mārga-Sāstra*, is identical with the Pāli work, *Vimutti-magga*. Nevertheless the plan of the two works, *Visuddhi-magga* and *Vimutti-magga*, is similar but not identical. The *Visuddhi-magga* is decidedly more systematic than the *Vimutti-magga* or the *Mokṣa-Mārga-Sāstra*.

The need of tracing the practical device to the original source will be felt when we consider the long duration of time we shall have to devote to yogic practices. The least doubt in them will adversely affect our zeal, endeavour, and aspiration. We must be sure of what we do. A reliable authority is what can pull us through this long period. Hence we have discussed on the reliability of authority off and on. The discussion will arouse the interest of the novice, maintain his spirit of vigorous attempt at yogic achievement, and make him utilize it in intellectual insight.

To resume the topic, Upatissa has given us his method under the section, 'The White Kasiṇa' (p. 127) of the *Vimutti-magga*. It does not differ from the sections of the previous three kasiaṇs. In a way it does not much differ from that of the *Visuddhi-magga*. But still we are bringing it before

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readers to let them see if they can discern some subtle difference between the ways of presenting it in the two works. Upatissa says :

> The practised yogin grasps the sign in a natural place. He sees the sign in various places in white flowers, moonlight, sunlight, starlight or a round mirror. Beginning with these, he sees the sign always before him, through pleasure and through pain. Thus the after-image of the white sign occurs to him.

It is apparently mixed up with that of the light kasiṇa given on the next page (p. 128), wherein also 'moonlight, sunlight ..' are given. The moonlight has also been mentioned by Buddhaghosa in connection with this kasiṇa, but the sunlight is not mentioned.

In the Candābhā (Moonlight) Jātaka (No. 135) the moonlight (candābha) and the sunlight (sūryābhā) are explained as follows :

> "By Candābhā the white (odāta) kasiṇa is indicated. By Sūryābhā the yellow (pīta) kasiṇa (is indicated). The person, who herein this region of beings (satta-loka) meditates through intellect (paññāya) on these two kasiṇas, gradually enters (therein) having made (these kasiṇas) support, and stays therein; that person having done so and, through obtaining the second (form) trance, surely becomes the attainer of the Ābhassara (second) Brahmaloka. Or alternatively (that person) attains the Ābhassara Brahmaloka who brings about the Jhāna by increasing the counter-part kasiṇa as far as the moonlight and the sunlight are spread, by making it (that kasiṇa) support; this amounts to saying that he meditates through intellect on both of these (two) lights.

So we see that the Elder Upatissa utilises textual sources, but without referring to them and also without the needed explanation. If he had really made use of this jātaka or others, he should have explained the anomally of organizing the white

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kasiṇa on the support of sunlight. The jātaka was narrated in order to illustrate the keen intellect of Sariputta. The sunlight therein means a symbolic reference to the golden light of the sun seen at its rising and setting (Mora Jātaka No. 159), and thus to the yellow kasiṇa. In short sunlight is not appropriate to the white kasiṇa.

To continue the topic, Upatissa says of a novice:

> The new yogin is different. The new yogin grasps the sign in a prepared place. He is not able to grasp it in a non-prepared place. He follows what is expedient in the practice of the white kasiṇa. This yogin makes a maṇḍala on cloth, plank or wall in the shape of a triangle or a square, with colour resembling that of the morning star. He edges it with another colour. Thus he prepares the white sign (p. 127).

The morning star mentioned herein is taken for or as the Oṣadhi-tārakā (medicine-star or the planet Venus)

In the 8th Abhibhāyatana, the white colour is likened to the colour of this planet and to that of the cloth made in Vārāṇasi. The simile is to show the entire whiteness of the object, not its brightness. The new yogin mentioned above is a novice without the previous background of merit. As for the best design, Upatissa has already said on the earth kasiṇa:

"According to the principal teacher's instructions, a circle is the best. The maṇḍala may be made on cloth, on a board or on a wall. But it is best on the ground. This is the teaching of predecessor teachers." These teachers are not named; they are presumably the leading monks of the Monastery he belonged to.

A short digest of the white kasiṇa at this stage will not be uncalled for or unnecessary. The three kasiṇas, the white, the fire, and the eight kasiṇas, will look somewhat alike. But the reader should have noted that the white colour will be conceived only in the white kasiṇa; the other two kasiṇas are, so to say, to be thought as a mere flame or a glow of light, respectively. As such the white kasiṇa should present less difficulty for organization than the other two. The white surface would of

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course reflect some light, but the conception of this brightness on the surface should not engage our attention.

'One thing at a time' should be our motto in the kasiṇa practice. Buddhistic psychology would not allow any two percepts or concepts at one and the same mental moment. The principle might be subject to our current scientific observation and verification; but the thing is taken as already established in Buddhism ... This principle is one of the fundamental tenets of Buddhism. The Master has positively stated that the same mind dose not stay for more than a mental moment (*Dīgha* I. 9. Poṭṭhapādo sutta). Whatever we like to see among the varieties of objects, we see by adverting to that object alone; we may thus select one thing among many either for perception, conception, or thinking.

Now this kasiṇa intently gazed at should be learnt well. The test of learning will be the successful reproduction of the white colour on the mental field. In other words, we should be able to think in white or whiteness, not in language. The white design gazed at so intently by us should be recollected off and on till the sign is produced, reproduced, or reflected on the mental field. The trial and error method of learning a sign and then of trying to remember it vividly would give us the right time of recollecting the design or the sign.

One should find out the cause, in such attempts as the above, why the sign does not appear in the mind. The white surface of a circular spot of the design is probably thought too easy to learn and consequently an adequate amount of effort is not applied in the learning stage. The correct way then would be to arouse our interest as our savant advises us to do more than once. To think over the benefit of this kasiṇa practice might be appropriate currently. Our savant says in the Pakiṇṇaka kathā of the Sesa (remaining) Kasiṇa (Chapter V) thus:

"By means of Odāta (white) Kasiṇa, there succeed such works as the creation of white shapes, the removal of torpor and lassitude, the destroying of darkness (of obscurity) for the purpose of seeing forms through the divine eye (dibba-cakkhu) etc." Another savant, Upatissa, also says similar things about its benefit: "He overcomes rigidity and torpor, dispels darkness,

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produces brightness and arouses the divine eye through the white kasi a ..." (p. 127)

The assurance of two authoritative savants should convince us that the white kasiṇa is productive of benefits wonderfully useful even at present. The learnt sign or after-image is not different from the preparatory sign or the artificial design we practise at. The latter is material, while the former is mental. Upon this mental picture the counterpart sign should arise. This sign is explained fully in the earth kasiṇa by Buddhaghosa:

"This possesses neither colour, nor size and shape ... This is simply born of meditative perception (sannajam) and merely an arisen phenomenon of the Samādhi-attainer." This was capable of being channelled.

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X

Practice of Light Kasiṇa

Preparation of Light Kasina

AMONG THE ten kasiṇas the light kasiṇa is not found in the suttas. The first book of the *Abhidhamma* treats of the eight Kasiṇas from the earth to the white. In the enumeration of the usual ten kasiṇas in the suttas 111. 10 and 11, *Majjhima* 11. 27) the additional two kasiṇas are those of sky (ākāśa) and consciousness (vinnāṇa). The commentary of the said *Abhidhamma* in the section of the First Jhāna enumerates the devices (kammaṭṭhāns) as thirty-eight, not forty, as given by our savant.

Buddhaghosa also casually mentions, under the Vinicchaya-kathā or the Conclusive Topic of the first of the ten disagreeable subjects in the sixth chapter of his work, the number of the textual devices as thirty-eight thus: "For among the thirty-eight subjects (ārammaṇa) described in the text, there are no subjects so horrifying as this one." The sub-commentator also does not explain this apparent discrepancy. Upatissa rigidly following the textual number (63) enumerates the subjects of meditation as thirty-eight, takes up again the two subjects, viz, 'The Light Kasiṇa" (128) and "The (Separated) Space Kasiṇa" (129) later on.

A reasonable explanation, however, is found in the commentary of the said *Abhidhamma*. The section on the remaining (sesa) kasiṇas at the end of the earth kasiṇa says: "In the Mahā-Sakula-

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udayi sutta (*Majjhima* II. 27.), however, ten kasiṇas are told. Among these the consciousness kasiṇa ... entirely belongs to the formless category only; hence it (the said kasiṇa) is not said here. As for the sky kasiṇa, the commentary says that there are two types of it; one is the sky established after the removal of the kasiṇa, that is, the regular one; the other is the limited sky conceived in the empty places such as holes, etc.

> The first category belongs to the formless, whereas the second category does to the form (rūpāvacara). Because of its mixed nature, this (kasiṇa) was not brought (included) in this form (rūpāvacara) precept ... The Limited Sky ... becomes the way (means) to the arising of Form; this should be accordingly taken (included in the kasiṇas).

The above argument is in a way convincing; so far as the last two kasiṇas were excluded herefrom. But it does not give us the reason for including the light kasiṇa in its last chapter, the commentary on the Atthuddhāra Kaṇḍa, whereas in the text itself there is no mention of the light kasiṇa. At any rate Buddhaghosa is voicing the tradition and the inclusion of this kasiṇa in general practice is one of the most needful in the yogic practices according of him.

The total number of kammaṭṭhānas might be much more than the number given by our savants and commentators. For we find neither the number thirty-eight nor forty in the suttas. What we frequently meet with in items comprising the said number in the suttas is as follows:

1. The Four Jhānas; these are not separately named in the said number of devices; but these are basic to every item of Buddhistic device.
2. The Ten Asubhā or disagreeable contemplations (bhāvanā).
3. The Ten Remembrances; these are evidently collected from separate suttas; all of these are, however, found in the text.
4. The Ten Kasiṇas; these are also seemingly collected, classified, adjusted, and consolidated from different suttas and

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regular groups, such as the eight Abhibhāyatana and vimokkha, etc.

5. The Four Brahma-vihāras; these are pre-Buddhistic; these are also regular precepts of the Master; the first of the four Viāhras called Mettā is also found separately. The *Yogasūtra* (1. 33) also gives these four as one of the ways of restraining the mind, but in a narrower sense and sphere than what we find in Buddhistic yoga.
6. The Four Formless Absorptions; in Upatissa's enumeration of the textual thirty-eight devices, the last two are included; the first two are shifted to the group of the Ten Kasiṇas; Buddhaghosa, however, replaces two in the textual group of the Four and completes the Ten Kasiṇas by inserting the Light Kasiṇa and the Limited Sky Kasiṇa.
7. The Deliberations; one is the perceiving of disfavourable outcome in and from food, gross or subtle; this is a distasteful kind of meditation; the purport is to eliminate the attachment to the body and mind and their allurement aggrandizement; this sort of meditation is what has probably prompted our savants to advise us that it is not to be developed; it is, however, in keeping with the idea of Buddhist liberation.
8. The other of the Two is the scrutiny of elements; the purport is to separate oneself from everything gross and subtle.

Besides the above devices of meditation, there are many important devices of meditation and insight. It is strange, how the above forty devices only were accepted in the later tradition as the main Kammaṭṭhānas; our savants have practically made the number still smaller by reducing it to Ten Kasiṇas only by Buddhaghosa, and to Ten Kasiṇas and Four Brahma-vihāras only by Upatissa. Our savants are probably right in reducing the devices to the minimum. This reduction shows the importance of the Four Form Trances and these Ten Kasiṇas for meditation in Buddhistic yoga, barring the separate specific devices for Insight.

This light kasiṇa, however, is implied in the text and also in the commentary. For the channelling of meditative light is

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spoken of often in the suttas and the commentary. This could not have been possible without gaining control over its channelling. Again in organizing the supernormal sight, some device or other must have been necessary. Our savant must have been right when he states in the section 'Dibba-cakkhu' or the supernormal sight or eye (*Visuddhi-magga* Chapter XIII.) as follows:

> Through the Divine Eye ... (the practising monk) sees ... The beginner, the son of a good family, who desires to see thus, having made the foundation trance productive of supernormal knowledge, upon the object of the kasiṇa, and (having made this trance) in all respects competent to channellization, should make one of these three kasiṇas, such as Tejo-(Fire) kasiṇa, Odāta (White) kasiṇa, and Āloka (Light) kasiṇa, near at hand ...

From this we can easily conclude that this light kasiṇa was anyhow operative among the expert monks in this field.

The oft-repeated phrase of 'āloka-saññā' or light-like clear consciousness, to be ever kept in mind even while going to sleep might have been one of the reasons why the tradition changed the consciousness kasiṇa into the light kasiṇa in the later ten kasiṇas. This light kasiṇa is also closely related to the meditative light discussed in the 20th chapter of the second phase of this research. This light appears to partake of the counterpart sign described in the light kasiṇa. The latter is evidently much more efficient than the casual occurrence of meditative light.

The general phenomenon of meditative light indicates that this kasiṇa is quite natural and may be as competent, of course in its counterpart stage, as our savant has described in his work. The replacement of the consciousness kasiṇa by this light kasiṇa is another reason for us to mark well that this kasiṇa must have been tried and approved by the then clergy. For all these reasons, there is great possibility of achieving something of value in this practice.

Unlike other kasiṇas, this kasiṇa might admit of a variety of convenenient devices or rather kasiṇa designs. The principle of preparing a kasi a design is to obtain a flat and uniform surface

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of a circular spot measuring one foot across. In this light kasiṇa we are asked to obtain a reflected glow of light just of the same dimension as that of the other kasiṇa designs. It is not the direct source of light, but only the reflected glow of light that is used in this device. In the fire kasiṇa, the flame of the burning wick seen through a hole was the design, so that source of the flame was directly to be gazed at.

So this kasiṇa practice is also unlike that of the fire kasiṇa. This is also not like the 'Trāṭaka' found in the *Haṭhayoga* described in the section of the same name in the first phase of this research. In that, one had to gaze directly at the source of bright light; the purport of such intent gaze at, say, the bright sun appears to be diverse. In this, however, the light is always a reflected glow, and therefore not bright. The method of lessening the brightness is effected by obtaining the reflection on the earthen wall or upon bare ground.

This purport is made clear by preparing an artificial glow of light reflected upon the wall or ground. The source of light in that case is to be the burning wick placed within a covered earthen pot with a hole to let the light pass through it. This shows an earnest plan of preparing the device of a glow of dim light. This practical consideration, among others, is probably enough to assure us that this kasiṇa must have been prepared and also practised upon. If so, the learnt sign should have been likewise obtained and the counterpart sign also must have been experienced by some.

Buddhaghosa on Light Kasina

We are introducing under this section the instructions of Buddhaghosa regarding this kasiṇa. The need of his own words is evidently the first thing we feel, when we are going to spend a few months on the practice of his kasiṇa method. For he is the principle authority on the subject. The commentary refers to his work, the *Visuddhi-magga*, whenever it has to give us a method of particular meditation. If anyone thinks that he can write a book on meditation, he will have to give the words of Buddhaghosa on the subject he means to dwell upon with some authority. Similarly, Buddhaghosa ever tries to give us the impression that he is writing with the full authority of the old

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commentary and the tradition he belongs to. But the real authority is the text which he never fails to quote where he can do so relevantly.

But the materials of the text are scattered throughout the *Tipiṭaka*, the Three Baskets or Divisions of the Words of the Buddha. So the ultimate authority rests with the Master, whether our savants write on the subject or anyone of us ventures to do so. It is not that a competent yogin cannot write what he has truly experienced, but it is for the reason that the individual experience needs to be verified by some standard. No standard will probably be able to stand the test of time longer than the standard provided by the experience of the Master. That is the reason why this research has been trying its best to gather the scattered yogic materials from the scriptures and present them as systematically as possible.

Now Buddhaghosa presents the tradition more than the Master's own words. For he takes it for granted that the tradition he represents correctly intprets the Master's words. We may doubt it. We have shown time and again that it is not invariably so. The discrepancy arises due to several reasons and the time and tradition widen it more and more. Fortunately the Elder Upatissa and his work have provided us with a slightly different tradition and thereby a ready means to compare their ways of interpreting the same textual source by both our savants.

Nevertheless the real test of the efficacy of yogic practices will ultimately rest upon the achievement of novices. Accordingly a novice or a beginner will never be satisfied with anything less than what he has come to realise and achieve in the best of yoga, or meditation, or insight. So the verification of the test lies with the novice more than with the savant; a novice instinctively tries to verify what he is taught with what he is confronted with in the name of the authority. So it is the best of principles to know before hand the different versions of yoga and yogic devices.

With the above qualification, the work of Buddhaghosa will be a source of perennial interest for and inspiration to Buddhistic yoga and insight. To resume the topic, our savant,

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Buddhaghosa, has given us a short section on this kasiṇa in the 5th chapter of his work as follows :

> In the Light Kasiṇa, one learning the Light Kasiṇa, as it is said (in the old commentary—the sub-commentary), grasps the sign in a wall-hole, or in a key-hole (a hole made into the door), or in a window-aperture. According to one who is merited and meritorious, the sign appears at seeing the circle (glow) of light, reflected, on a wall or a floor, by sunlight and moonlight entering through any one of wall-holes, etc., or reflected upon the ground by sunlight and moonlight entering through the gap of thickly leaved tree-branches, or through the gap of thick branches of a shed (Maṇḍapa).

He says further on: "By others also the same circle (glow) of light already described should be meditated upon (repeating the word) as 'Obhāsa, Obhāsa,' or 'Āloka, Āloka." Both the Pāli words mean light. The repeating of these words is for nothing more than to help us remember what we are practising.

Suggesting a more stable and convenient device, he says:

> If one be unable to do so, he should light a lamp within a pot, and, making a hole in the pot and closing the mouth of the pot, put it facing the wall. The light of the lamp issuing (forth) through that hole will make a circle (glow). That (Circle or glow) should be meditated upon as (repeating) 'Āloka, Āloka.' This becomes more lasting than others (other glows).

The difference between the fire and the light kasiṇas should be marked well herein. In the fire (tejo, flame) kasiṇa, one has to gaze at the flame through that hole; but in this light kasiṇa, one gazes at the reflected glow of the light cast upon the wall.

The above plan of preparing an alternative device opens up other convenient devices for our practice. The modern appliances of electric light of a few candle power might serve the purpose of this kasiṇa, provided a reflected glow is obtained as prescribed. Our savant says further:

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"The learnt sign resembles the circle (glow) reflected on the wall or upon the ground. The counterpart sign resembles a densely clear cluster of light." He concludes: "The rest is like that (previous kasiṇa)." This shows a sort of records of real experience.

Upatissa on This Kasina

After the method of Buddhaghosa, we are introducing that of Upatissa. Not only of these savants, but, if available, we would have given the methods of other savants also. Unfortunately the devices practised in other sects are not available. The allurement and the prestige of philosophical theories and discussions in Buddhism have been presumably the cause of the disappearance of practical devices in later Buddhism. The Master does not appear to have encouraged the philosophizing of the Dhammas among his disciples and devotees. Later on we find the most extensive flights in philosophy logically based on the Master's pronouncement.

But the Master ever discouraged any indication of such logical flights in his disciples, as might be inferred from the two suttas of the *Dīgha-nikāya* (II. 2, and III. 5) also. He taught a double system of 'Samatha and Vipassano,' or 'Meditating and Thinking', not any one of the two alone. Thinking assimilates whatever is gained by meditating on the Dhammas; the former estranged from the association of the latter can therefore scarcely be thought of in early Buddhism.

Now this kasiṇa partakes of both these two mental concomitants. This obhāsa appearing in the stage of vipassanā is called the vipassanā-obhāsa and is said to be one of the ten defilements in the 20th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. Towards the end of the first section of the 20th chapter *Vimutti-magga* Upatissa has mentioned 'Illumination' as one of the ten distractions. (p. 298)

To resume the topic, we find this practice in the *Vimutti-magga* (p. 128) as follows: "The practised yogin grasps the sign in a natural place. He sees the sign in various places—in moonlight, sunlight, lamplight or in the light of gems..." The practised yogin is meant to be a person with former merit. The natural place indicates an unprepared kasiṇa design.

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For persons without such former merits as indicated above, he says:

> The new yogin is different. The new yogin grasps the sign in a prepared place...This yogin chooses a wall facing east or west. He fills a bowl with water and keeps it in a sunny place nearby. This water causes a maṇḍala of light. From this maṇḍala, light rises and is reflected on the wall. Here he sees the light sign..." (p. 128)

A similar device of the light kasiṇa in the *Vimutti-magga* is indicative of the reliability of the kasiṇa among the then clergy. The device must have been practised not openly; for this sort of artificial object of meditation, if openly found before a monk, would have unfavourably aroused resentment or inquisitiveness in the people, as it would do even at present. Hence the Oriental tradition of keeping the yogic sādhanā or specific practice hidden from the people is justified. The members of the clergy would consequently stand away from such devices and resort to pure meditation that needs no auxiliary appliances. Under these circumstances the kasiṇa practice would soon cease to continue; the form trance would then be forgotten; the supernormal knowledge would be disbelieved; it is even doubtful if the knowledge of liberation would survive in the absence of these prerequisites.

The laity and the general public are probably free from those encumbrances; they can therefore smoothly organize these kasiṇa devices and verify them with their own experience. For it is rightly said that the yoga is its own teacher and develops through it alone (*Yogasūtra* commentary III. 6 sūtra). There are also several precepts of the Master to that effect.

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XI

Miscellany

Limited Sky or Space Kasina

WE HAVE already seen how the sky kasiṇa has been divided into two concepts; one is the unlimited or limitless sky organized in the first formless absorption; the other is the limited sky that is said to come within the category of form. The sky is conceived as devoid of elements, forms, colour, and matter in Buddhism. The gap between materials, things, etc., is empty of them; it is therefore regarded as sky or space. This empty space is limited by things and therefore known as the limited sky.

The open sky extending like a dome overhead is termed the ajaṭākāśa or the disentangled sky in the commentary of the Kathāvatthu, the fifth book of the *Abhidhamma* (VI. 6 and 7). The colour of this sky looks blue. It is regarded as a mere illusion and often cited as an example of illusion in Oriental philosophical works. In the *Abhidhamma* and its commentary the open sky is a mere concept (paññatti). The above commentary says that the blue deep of the open sky is not visible through the eyes; it is known as such through the door of mind-consciousness, that is, it is a mere concept known by the mind alone.

This kasiṇa is also prepared on a plan similar to that of other kasiṇa. Although empty space is said to be knowable

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only through the mind, the perception of space is generated through the help of eye-consciousness. So one will have to grasp the sign of sky gazing at the empty space between two things. This would look anomalous, but both our savants advise us to do the same. Hence this kasiṇa is as amenable to regular practice as other kasiṇas are.

With the help of the material objects limiting the intervening gap or space, this kasiṇa is organized and a similar learnt sign is recollected; this kasiṇa, therefore belongs to the form category and not to the formless one. In its operation also, the counterpart sign arisen upon or out of the learnt sign is channelled in material objects or their form aspect. Hence it belongs to the form category.

Buddhaghosa on Sky Kasina

The above information about this kasiṇa will help understand Buddhaghosa's short instruction regarding this device. In the 5th chapter of his work, Buddhaghosa says :

> In the limited Sky Kasiṇa also one learning the Sky Kasiṇa grasps the sign in the sky, so is it said, in a wall-hole, or in a sky-hole (a hole made into the door), or in a window aperture. The merited and meritorious one however gets the sign produced even when he sees any one of the wall-holes, etc.

The sky-hole is applicable to the old style door only; the door in the old style is made with a bolt in the middle; a hole is made through the door a little above this bolt. It is so adjusted that a key of a rod, the upper part of which is bent and the lower part can be put through the key-hole. With this rod the bolt can be pushed on the right and left sides and thereby the door is shut and opened even from without.

He says further for the ordinary novices:

> Others should make a hole as large as a span and four finger-breaths (measuring one foot) in the well-thatched shed or in any one of the (sheets of) hide, mat, etc. And then

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he should meditate on the same hole or the wall-hole, etc., as (repeating the word) 'Ākāśa, Ākāśa.'

The design of the kasiṇa is obviously uniform with other designs, viz., one foot across. The gaze would be directed at the hole. The purport is to visualize empty space, voidness, or zero.

Then he dewells on its experience as follows :

> Herein the learnt sign (uggaha nimitta) becomes (appears) like the hole together with the boundary edges of the wall. Even if one may try to increase it (the sign), it does not do so. The counterpart sign however rises up and gets established as the entire circle (maṇḍala) of the sky. The rest is to be understood as described in the earth kasiṇa.

The learnt sign will appear as the kasiṇa, whereas the counterpart sign will spring up as a spatial circle. Moreover, "it will increase when it is done so."

Upatissa on this Kasina

Upatissa indicates to us a clear difference between two categories of unlimited and limited types of sky. He says :

> In the space kasiṇa, there are two kinds: The first is space that is separate from form; the second is space that is not separate from form. The sign of the space kasiṇa is space that is separate from form; the space sign that is grasped in an opening is space that is not separate from form...

The latter is clearly the limited sky kasiṇa. The former is evidently the limitless sky kasiṇa and is scarcely different from the first formless absorption, the spatial infinity.

About the preparation of this kasiṇa, he says further (p. 129):

> The man who takes up the space kasiṇa, grasps the sign in space that is natural or prepared. The practised yogin grasps the sign in a natural place. He sees the sign in natural places—in some opening (in a wall), in the space of an open

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window, in the space which is between the branches of trees...

This is almost similar to what we find in the *Visuddhi-magga*. The new yogin is different. The new yogin grasps the sign in prepared place; and not in a non-prepared place. This yogin goes to a calm abode on the outside of which are no obstructions. He makes a circular opening (in the wall) and grasps the space sign,...In this space kasiṇa, the fourth and the fifth meditations, jhanas, are produced. The rest is as was fully taught before. (p. 129-130)

What he is not clear about is the counterpart sign in all the kasiṇas. From the water kasiṇa to the last kasiṇa, he writes in the middle of the instructions: "Thus the after-image of... occurs to him." But he does not clarify what and how the after-image occurs. Under the separate section, 'The After-image' (p. 77-78), he speaks of the sign as: "...but it (the after-image) can be seen with closed eyes as before (while looking at the maṇḍala) only in thought...It appears together with mind. This is called the after-image." This is as much as to say what is seemingly identical with the after-image of the Buddhaghosa. But what are we to know about the counter-part sign of Upatissa? He cannot miss it; he must have meant it also when he speaks of the 'after-image'. If so, he has evidently mixed up the two separate technical terms so clearly differentiated by Buddhaghosa.

Benefits of Kasina Practice

Upatissa gives the benefit of each kasiṇa in the body of its description, while Buddhaghosa gives the benefits towards the end of the 5th chapter, after dealing with all the kasiṇas in the Pakiṇṇaka (Miscellany) Kathā. Both the savants speak of similar benefits arising from the practice of the kasiaṇs. In the colour kasiṇa, the two attainments are the Abhibhāyatana and the Subha (Third) Vimokkha, so called by Buddhaghosa. These two are named by Upatissa (in English translation) as 'the position of mastery' and 'the emancipation of the beautiful', respectively. Both of these two, much more frequently mentioned and described in the text than the kasiṇas, must

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have been very popular as meditative devices among the clergy before the introduction of the kasiṇas.

We are, however, at a loss to account for their apparent neglect in the commentary, the *Visuddhi-magga*, and the *Vimutti-magga*. What we have to surmise is to take them as the higher steps after the kasiṇas. The commentary on the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, Aṭṭhasālini, at the end of the earth kasiṇa and the remaining kasiṇas, treats of these two devices briefly and exegetically. At the end of these two topics, the said commentary says:

> Whether it be the kasiṇa, or the Abhibhāyatana, or the vimokkha, it (each of these three) is indeed of the form nature (rūpāvacara). It gets the name of Kasiṇa due to its entirety of the Ārammaṇa (object or support); it is Abhibhāyatana due to its mastery over the object or support; it is Vimokkha due to its emancipation from hindrances and at the same time its firm hold of the object in this support. Therein the precept of the kasiṇa is in accordance with the Abhidhamma; the other (two) are preached in accordance with the precept of the Suttanta; so is it said and to be known...

The above explanation is implied off and on in the commentary of the suttantas (that is, suttas) also. But, these devices could not have been at first brought about so lightly as to be related later to the position the said commentary would give them. The devices of organizing these two practices are implied only in their description, but not given explicitly. The first of the two, Abhibhāyatana, is, however, so clearly described that the organizatian of it can be adequately derived from the unprepared design of the elemental and colour kasi as.

The benefits common to all the four colour kasiṇas and found in both the works are the attainment, as mentioned above, of the abhibhāyatana and subha (third) vimokkha. Another benefit, common to colour kasiṇas and described by Buddhaghosa, is the attainment of (the power of) creating shapes in colours blue, yellow, red, and white (as the case may be). Upatissa also says:

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> He can change all things to blue; he sees the colour of blue anywhere . . . he sees yellow everywhere . . . He is able to change into the colour of red . . . He sees the colour of red prevailing everywhere (so is it in the white kasiṇa), pp. 124-127)

This is evidently the power of externalizing the mental colour on outer objects or things, and on the atmosphere. Without channelling the colour sign, the meditation on colour is said to be even externalized unintentionally sometimes. This sort of phenomenon, however, might have been due to the intention of the yogin to expand the mental field. But we must not forget that the meditative experience is often mental, or internal, or subjective. The objectification or externalization of samādhi is a rare event in ordinary meditation.

The subjective experience in yogic sādhanā or practice is often spoken of as the inner world full of wonders in yogic circles; but this sort of experience cannot be verified without its objectification or externalization. It is, therefore, the colour kasiṇa that can materialize the human aspiration in and expectation of yogic possibilities. Hence the benefit of colour kasiṇas should be closely studied and deliberated upon off and on. Even if it be a mere allurement or delusion, the practice would certainly be beneficial to us in many ways.

The benefits specific to particular colour kasiṇas are given below:

Buddhaghosa says:

> By means of Blue Kasiṇa, there can be produced Darkness. By means of yellow kasiṇa, there can be resolved that gold be produced . . . In the white kasiṇa, the sloth and torpor can be removed; darkness can be dispelled; illumination can be effected in order to see the form (Rūpa) through divine eye.

There are instances also of these manifestations in the text itself; the Elder Pilindavaccha once produced gold (Mahāvagga, 6.3. Pilindavaccha-vatthu); the feats of darkness and illumination are said to have been displayed by the Master

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himself. Nevertheless the cases of externalization should be closely scrutinized before any credence is given to them.

In the light kasiṇa, the benefits are found similar to those of the white kasiṇa in both the works of our savants. In the sky or spatial kasiṇa, Buddhaghosa is more specific in stating the benefits than Upatissa is. The former says:

> By means of the Ākāśa (sky) kasiṇa, one is able to lay bare what is hidden. Having created the sky (space) within or inside the earth, the hills, etc., one can take up and maintain postures. One can move through the walls, etc. without being hindered (by them).

The mental body can logically pass through any material obstruction; but the visible and thereby physical body is also said to do such a feat of passing through; this is certainly explanable by yogic laws only. Aireal travel is a common feature in Buddhistic yoga often met with in the text itself.

Upatissa also says the same thing:

"There are two distinctive benefits, thus: A man is able to pass through obstructions such as walls, mountains, and the like. His bodily activities are not impeded, and he becomes fearlesss." (p. 129) These powers are included in the category of iddhi by means of resolve. The Paṭisambhidāmagga, however, adds in the clause of this iddhi (3.2.6. 9 passage): "He (yogin) is naturally in possession of the Ākāsa-kasiṇa Samāpatti (absorption)." Herein the kasiṇa presumably means the textual kasiṇa and not the limited sky kasiṇa.

Moreover, these kasiṇa practices are conducted gradually in all directions. In this very Pakiṇṇaka-kathā, Buddhaghosa says:

"All these (kasiṇas) have the divisions, such as upward, downward, horizontal, nonparallel, immeasurable." Each of these has been explained by him and denotes the excellent quality of this type of meditation. In the Miscellaneous Teachings (p. 130), Upatissa says:

> If one acquires facility in one (kasiṇa) sign, all other signs follow. . . . The four colour kasiṇas are the most excellent,

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> . . . The white kasiṇa, because it illumines and because throught it an unobstructed state of mind is attained. (p. 130)

Three Signs of Kasina

There are three signs to be considered in the practice of all the ten kasiṇas. Even if the word, sign (nimitta), be used without any qualification, the context determines the sign meant therein. The first sign is the design of the kasiṇa device itself. The perception of the design is therefore the first sign. This is also the preparatory sign. Intently gazing at the kasiṇa design, the perception of the kasiṇa sign becomes constant. In colour kasiṇa, the circular spot of blue, yellow, red, or white, as the case may be, will naturally be the stimulus. This stimulus in contact with the eye will generate the eye-consciousness, known to us as the visual perception. This is the first sign.

The second sign is the learnt sign, technically called in the *Visuddhi-magga*, uggaha nimitta. Whatever we look at intently is sure to leave some sort of impression on the mind. This impression is learnt; the eye has been adjusted to the stimulus; the image of the visual perception must have been formed within the mind; this image should appear on its recall. This is the second sign. Our authority says that the design of the kasiṇa should be practised so long as the same design appears vividly even when the eyes are shut. We have called it the after-image, that is, the mental picture cast in the mental field exactly after gazing at the objective design. Our authority says that this after-image should be produced exactly as the original kasiṇa device.

It is plain that our practice can and must ensure the production of this sign whenever and wherever we recall it. Our savants also advise us in their own way that much. There is no question of former merit or non-merit complex so far. If the after-image is not forthcoming on recall, there is some defective procedure in the method of learning to blame. Besides the instruction of our savants to check up the procedure, we have an additional method of 'trial and error' so handy with us.

This last method is simply to check the result after the trial

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or attempt. If we fail to recall the design gazed at, there must have been some error in the procedure of grasping the design, learning it effectively, or recalling it properly. The trial will have to be repeated once more. If we fail, the trial will be made over again. In this way, the practice will be continued till this sign appears. Our commonsense also says that this sort of vivid recall should not lie beyond our mental capacity or competence. This is the second sign.

The third sign is the counterpart sign, technically called in the *Visuddhi-magga* the paṭibhāga nimitta. This is, so to say, a phenomenal sign born of upacāra (access or proximate) samādhi. It dawns, so it is said, suddenly upon the after-image, overpowering the latter completely. The counterpart sign in the colour kasiṇa is the following as given in the *Visuddhi-magga*:

"In the blue kasiṇa . . . the counter-part sign freed from the kasiṇa circle arises in the sky like the fan of gems." In other three kasiṇas also the same sort of sign is implied. The simile of the fan of gems would, of course, be changed into a fan of blue gems, yellow gems, red gems, and white gems in the four colour kasiṇas, respectively. The sub-commentator has supplied the word 'inda-nīlamaṇi' in the maṇi (gem) of the first simile.

From the description of the kasiṇa given by Buddhaghosa, it appears that the counterpart sign is basically a clarified concept freed from the material concept of the after-image; for the latter is anyhow linked with the original kasiṇa, which is material. Consequently, we should not be impatient of its advent; the after-image itself is the harbinger of this third sign. The former is within our reach; the latter must not therefore fail us.

Upatissa mixes up, as already mentioned, the two signs, the learnt and the counterpart. Even in the preparatory sign, he says what appears to be looking at the kasiṇa device with the moving of the eye-balls right and left, upward and downward, and with the eye-balls drawing in and out. Thus on the topic of the earth kasiṇa, in the eighth chapter, section one (p. 77-78) he says:

There are two kinds of signs, namely, the grasping sign and

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> the after-image . . . He gains the perception of the maṇḍala and sees it as it were in space, sometimes far, sometimes near, sometimes to the left, . . . to the right, . . . big, . . . small, . . . ugly, sometimes lovely. . . . This is named grasping sign. (p. 77)
>
> Through the following of that (the grasping sign) again and again the after-image arises . . . but it (the after-image) can be seen with closed eyes as before (while looking at the maṇḍala) only in thought . . . This is called the after-image.

Evidently the counterpart sign is not explicitly mentioned herein. If the eye balls be moved or drawn in and out, the object would also move or approach and recede. The test of this method would be to see if the play on the kasiṇa with eye-balls helps the learning of the device and facilitates the recalling of it later on.

In Conclusion

The Master's system of meditation will have to assimilate the kasiṇa practice described and discussed so far into its own system. But we do not find any authentic autobiographical account in the suttas to show that the Master ever practised the artificial type of kasiṇa excepting the commentatorial version of utilizing these kasiṇas for various feats of supernormal significance. Textually and also commentatorially the form trance is fundamental in his system and also in the organization of any one of kasiṇas. The common base of both shows that the old commentary must have certainly found some authentic ground to adopt or adapt the kasiṇa to the immediate requirement of the practising members of the saṅgha.

The abhibhāyatana and vimokkha are so often mentioned in the suttas that the Master must have himself tried both these types which are almost akin to the kasiṇa. The last five items of the eight vimokkhas, however, belong to formless absorptions and the last one to the mindless one. The last four items of the eight abhibhāyatanas are practically similar to the four colour kasiṇas. Hence we shall not be far from truth, if we consider the kasiṇa to have been derived and systematized from the abhibhāyatana.

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It is, however, difficult to say whether or not the Master practised whatever he taught to his disciples. He has declared that he has taught whatever he had practised and experienced himself. The commentary of the *Majjhima Nikāya* says that this nikāya alone contains 3900 anusaṅdhis that are the same as dhammakkhandhas. So we can easily give credit to the 84000 items of dhammas preached by the Master. Two thousand out of these were spoken by other monks, but approved of later by the Master. For this reason, these discourses also have been recognized as the word of the Master.

The counting method of these items of dhammas is given in the Nidāna-kathā of the commentary of the first book of the *Abhidhamma*. Each of these items is explained in the text itself; the textual explanation contains more or less illustrations also; a large number of them is further clarified with examples, similes, and parables; some of them are enlarged with Jātaka stories. So the textual topics numbering many thousands would come up before us for careful study and evaluation. This is indeed a task of a life-time.

The commentary on each book of the *Tipiṭaka* explains the text as fully as it can. This explanation is enlarged in several ways and even supplied with important instances. Without consulting the commentary, we cannot move confidently in the text; for, the discrepancy between the commentatorial or traditional version and our own textual version would be too great to be reconciled. The best course to be adopted by us would be to follow the text in the light of the commentary. This latter course has, therefore, been adopted in this research as far as the textual and practical consistency allowed.

It is evidently the outlook from the critical Theravāda point of view. But we cannot be dogmatic against other more advanced and developed points of view, holding any preconceived bias agains the latter. For, the Pāli text itself contains matters that do not differ much from the principal tenets held in the latter. What is not found in the original text is the dogmatic philosophy that is found more or less in both the Vehicles, the Lesser and the Greater Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna). But for our practical purpose in the graduated course of kammaṭṭhānas, the former is much more helpful than the latter. In fact, the

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main priciples of Buddhism are intact and found in other sects of Buddhism also. We should never forget that the original scriptures of Buddhism started when the Buddha began to preach; before this event there was no possibility of any Buddhist scripture to come into existence.

The Master has nowhere sought any authority other than that of his own in support of what he realized, thought, and taught. He even claimed that he himself discovered the Dhamma through his own effort and endeavour. We have to believe him in what he said, if we are to get any benefit from his experience. This research is, therefore, a pioneer work in the field of the Master's system of meditation . . . The successive phases of this research have been produced with as much care and labour as possible. Each phase has been tried to be made complete in itself as far as it was possible within the scope proposed and planned.

The main objective of this research has been the presentation of the Master's own method of organizing the dhammas he discovered. The dhammas include all the devices and contrivances he employed in realizing the truth. The truth is a convenient word to express what we conceive as the highest achievement and satisfaction. We should never feel indifferent to the acquiring of supernormal knowledges, such as the topics provided in this phase. It is for this reason that the kasiṇa practice has been treated of herein so extensively.

The reader might wonder at the frequent mention of kasiṇa in the textual suttas. But he will find each of the eight kasiṇas mentioned with each of the four form trances in the first book of the *abhidhamma*. Whenever he finds any supernormal power displayed in the text, he will always find the power organized and based on some kasiṇa or other in the commentary on the relative suttas. Now the practice on kasiṇa would have been incomprehensible without its description in the *Visuddhi-magga*. But the real textual implication of this kasiṇa can scarcely be proved satisfactorily without one's own achievement to some extent in the field of kasiṇa.

From the foregoing chapters, it must have been clear that this research has undertaken a task not easy to be fulfilled. When I first thought of launching this project, I felt my own

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short-comings keenly in such a serious subject as the title of this research displays. I felt hesitation to disclose my incompetence in expressing what I have been thinking of the Master's system for a few decades so intently as to make me believe that I can write out something on the subject. This was the germination of the project.

This project could have never begun and continued so far without the gracious patronage of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal. I take this opportunity to reiterate my heart-felt respect and devotion, as expressed in the previous phases of this research also, to His Majesty. When I read the work so far accomplished, howsoever poorly, I feel that I could not have written better than what I have already done.

The devices described in the foregoing chapters will, I believe, show an authenticated way to the foundation trance. This trance, when established, may lead one either to deeper trances terminating in the cessation, or to a series of supernormal knowledges. The knowledge of one's own past is one of these unique knowledges, covering as far back events in time as one might have patience to investigate. The following chapters will deal with this facet of the Master's system of meditation as practically as I could derive and present from the available original sources.

The great minds of ancient times have contributed to this facet of human knowledge. Modern minds should not lag behind them. The latter should build upon the achievement of the former. The way to this achievement is within our reach. If this objective is fulfilled even in a small degree, the labour devoted to this research work will have been amply rewarded.

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XII

Mind-to-mind Knowledge: General Principles

Separation of Mind from Matter

THE DISCRIMINATION of mind and matter (Nāma-rūpa) is one of the principal means of realizing the truth of Anattā, that is egolessness, soullessness, or selflessness in Buddhism. Philosophically considered, it is highly controversial and has remained so since the beginning of philosophy. The Brahmajāla sutta, the very first, of the *Dīgha Nikaya* gives us the different shades of controversy about and over this conception. The very first chapter, the Puggala (the Being) kathā, of the Kathā-vatthu, the fifth book of the Abhidhamma, refutes the conception of a being with an ego in the renowned logical manner.

The being is conceived as nothing more than a collection of mind and matter in Buddhism. But early Buddhism does not take up the question of their metaphysical constitution, as the Sāṅkhya philosophy has done. In the latter the mind is held to be the primary and pure transformation or development of the primal undifferentiated nature termed—Prakriti or Pradhāna. The Yoga philosophy also follows the same doctrine. Early Buddhism eschews metaphysical questions altogether. In it mind and matter are taken as they manifest

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themselves in the known world, as the sabhāva (natural) dhamma (element).

So we are freed from their never-ending metaphysical controversy and free to follow mind and matter as they rise, stay, and set from moment to moment. They, however, do not mix with each other, as the 20th paccaya (condition) of the Paṭṭhāna, the last book of the *Abhidhamma*, definitely says in the explanatory section (niddesa) of the 24 conditions (paccayas):

"The conditional relation of material elements to immaterial elements is conditioned by the disjointed (vippayutta) condition. And (conversely) the conditional relation of immaterial element to material elements is conditioned by the (same) disjointed condition." This simple statement settles the question of mind and matter beyond all controversy. If one would try, one will have to face the whole canon of Buddhism. For the *Abhidhamma* is a classified presentation of all the dhammas or terms and items of the canon itself.

Hence in Buddhism mind stands in a naturally separate position from matter. We have thus only to realize this separation so well that the mind could be channellized into a desired direction and field of operation. This separation of mind from matter, although natural, is effected gradually through several devices. The first device is the observation of mind as given in the Sati-Paṭṭhāna sutta (I.10. *Majjhima* and II.9. *Dīgha*) fully described in the seventh chapter of the second phase of this research. The observation of mind is to be found in the tenth chapter thereof.

The second device is to organize and accomplish the kasiṇa. The third device is to practise the devices for the supernormal power. The first form trance is naturally separate from matter; the vision of trance is itself the mental field of the form (rūpāvacara) category; there is scarcely anything material in it; the fourth device is to organize for mental journey described in the iddhi-vidhā.

Generally we are aware of mind through its operation. We are using this medium constantly for whatever we perceive is due to the mental act and its result; whatever we think is also the mental product. The Buddhist psychology gives a long list

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of mental concomitants which arise in company with each moment of mind-consciousness; the latter never arises alone. It is because the mind is a collection of many mental factors, all of which are led by mind-consciousness.

The natural separation of mind from matter often gets mixed up with the conception of material objects around us. Even in thinking we often forget that it is entirely the mind that is thinking. So we have to find a device to produce an observable mental field and keep it up for a while in order to realize the existence of mind separate from the material objects. It is possible to do so only in a sort of samādhi.

In any organization of mind-to-mind knowledge, we have to apply our own mind to the mind of the person under observation. The practice of separating the mind from matter facilitates the channellization of one mind towards another mind. When contact is made, the interpretation of this contact would result in the said knowledge. In our everyday life also, we are often called upon to guess anyhow the disposition, emotion, and thought of some person or persons, which are all listed in the mental concomitants.

The empirical method of knowing another mind fails because of the prejudice and bias we are often preoccupied with. The yogic method is free from these disabilities and therefore succeeds in knowing what it is all about. Instances of this knowldege in the text and the commentaries show that almost all the liberated disciples of the Master possessed this knoweldge. The Master, however, tried to verify it through several means. The classical example is his knowing the mind of the leaders who realized the supramundane knowledge during his preaching and were initiated and ordained in the Saṅgha by means of a simple formula, "Ehi, Bhikkhu!" (Come, monk!). This sort of mind-reading is difficult. For the supramundane state has Nibbāna for its support.

Buddhaghosa on Mind-to-mind Knowledge

The mind-to-mind knowledge is termed "ceto-pariya-nāṇa" in Pāli. Buddhaghosa treats it under the section "Mind-to-mind Knowledge" in the 13th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. The description is rather short: we would have expected many more

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details in this important branch of supernormal knowledge than he has given in this section. It does not appear to be so due to the paucity or shortage of these details in the text, but it is due to his unwillingness to give more than what he thinks proper and conducive to inculcate an interest in the traditional Dhamma.

After defining this term in detail, he begins the real discussion with the question:

> How is this knowledge to be produced? This is accomplished by means of the divine eye. That is the preliminary work for this. Hence that monk having increased the light should investigate the mind by seeing, through divine eye, the colour of the blood circulating within the heart of another. When the mind is joyful, then blood becomes red like the ripe ruit of a Banyan tree. When the mind is in grief, the blood becomes black like the ripe blackberry. When the mind is indifferent, the blood becomes then like clear sesame oil.

The heart has several meanings; but the context shows that it is the physical heart that contains the physical blood. The blood may change colour with the changing mood of the mind; but the question is whether the three shades of colour mentioned above are enough to read another's mind fully. It is obviously not enough. It is really a preliminary lesson to train the mind in detecting the mood of anothor through the direct mothod. If one can see the blood of another's heart, it is certainly by itself a supernormal sight. Hence the mention of the divine sight is made in the beginning.

We see that this knowledge is dependent on that of the divine sight. The organization of the divine eye would be necessary for knowing another's mind. We have already described the process of organizing the divine eye in the fifth phase of this research under sections 41 to 44 (both numbers inclusive) of the third chapter therein, In short, according to Buddhaghosa, the organization is like this:

> One should make the immediate use of one of the three kasiṇas, Fire kasiṇa, White kasiṇa, and Light kasiṇa. He

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should habitually dwell in the access or pre-samādhi state organizing this kasiṇa; he should let it remain after increasing the kasiṇa.

The divine eye has some affinity with these three kasiṇas; for light is necessary for seeing visible objects. In divine sight also, the counterpart sign obtainable from one of these three bright kasiṇas is channelled wherever it is desired to see through divine eye. Buddhaghosa further says:

The purport (of access or pre-samādhi) is that he should not produce the appanā (absorption) therein; if he produces it. it would induce the foundation trance, and not support the preparatory work (for the divine sight). In these three (kasiṇas) however the light kasiṇa is the best.

The above instruction is tantamount to saying that one who is desirous of knowing the mind of another person should not immerse his mind into the samādhic state of absorption, but should stay at its approaching state only for directing the mind towards another mind. This is quite understandable. In a deep state of trance or absorption, it is presumably not possible to indulge in such excursion as mind-reading, etc. Buddhaghosa says further:

Hence he should investigate the mind by seeing the colour of the heart blood of another person like this: this sort (of blood) originates from a faculty of joy, this (sort) originates from a faculty of grief, this (sort) originates from a faculty of indifference. By this (practice) he should stabilize the knowledge of mind-reading (Ceto-pariya).

It appears that our savant does not insist on this practice: his purpose is to stabilize this knowledge anyhow.

Dhammapala on Interpretation of this Method

The sub-commentator, Dhammapāla, has explained the subject further. He says: "As one's (bodily) element assumes its course so does his inner mind (Buddhi) also ... Who is not another is

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the (practising) person himself ... One who is not the (practising) person himself is another." Such an explanation as this would look ridiculous. But the elders might have found it problematic to distinguish between persons perceiving and perceived; for in their eyes there is no perceiver, no attā (self or soul), no being inside or outside. So he thought it fit to distinguish between oneself and another tentatively. The word 'buddhi' smacks of the import of the primal pure element in this context, for the ordinary meaning of 'wisdom' does not fit herein; the primal pure element (mahātattva) current in the Sāṅkhya philosophy, however,is not accepted in Buddhism.

As he has explained the word 'attā' so he has also explained other words equivalent to it, e.g., sattā (beings), puggala (individual persons), etc. But his explanation of 'heart' (hadaya) is worth consideration. "Hadayarūpa" (heart material) is no 'hadayavatthu' (heart as the base of mind), but the muscle of heart, as meant in the relative instruction of the *Visuddhi-magga*, says he. In Buddhist psychology the basis of mental origination and operation is held to be the 'hadaya-vatthu', not the brain.

The mind is textually said to be situated within the body, as we find in the 2nd and 10th suttas of the *dīgha* in these words:

> He (after the fourth jhāna) brings and bends the mind for the realization of knowledge (Ñāṇa-dassana). He knows thus: 'This body of mine is verily possessed of shape (rūpa), made up of four elements, born of mother and father, heaped of rice and curry, subject ... to destruction. But this Consciousness (viññāṇa) of mine is attached herein, bound herein ...

This is also typically but briefly stated in the *Abhidhamma* as "yam rūpam nissāya" (based upon which material organ), the element of mind and "the element of mind-consciousness arise."

The commentary on the *Abhidhamma* explains the above phrase, as this is said surely of 'hadaya-vatthu' (heart-organ). The above textual phrase is found in the description (niddesa) of the 6th, 7th, 8th (nissaya), 10th, 21st, and 24th conditions (paccayas) in the last book of the *Abhidhamma*. This settles the question in Buddhistic psychology. There are, of course, a few

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exception as regards regions. The commentary on the above conditions in the initial one (hetu-paccaya) says:

> There are three Okāsas (living spaces)— Immaterial (nāma), Material (rūpa), and Mixed (Nāma-rūpa) Okāsas. Therein the Immaterial Formless existence (arūpa-bhāva) is the immaterial space; herein even without the material condition, the mere heart-organ (hadayavatthu), only the immaterial dhammas arise. The Unconscious existence (asaññi bhava) is the material space; therein even without the immaterial condition, the mere germinating mind (paṭisandhi-cittam), only the material dhammas arise. The Regular existence (pañca-okārabhāva, that is, the existence wherein all the five khṅadhas, material and immaterial heaps of dhammas, are found) is the mixed space (nāmarūpa-okāsa); therein even without the mere material (heart) organ in the germination (paṭisandhi), the immaterial formless dhammas do not arise, and even without the germinating mind, the material dhammas produced by kammos (actions) do not arise; for the material and immaterial dhammas arise only jointly (yuga-naddha).

This is tantamount to saying that it is only in the immaterial formless region whereineven the heart-organ is absent, but still the inhabitants of this region are conscious of this region. The classical example is that of Ālāra Kalāma and Uddaka Rāma-putta who are said to be living in these regions. The Bodhisattva is never born in any one of these regions, even if he is possessed of the formless absorption, inasmuch as these are inopportune resorts for a Bodhisattva; so it is said and given in the 93th birth story, the Paro-sahassa-jātaka.

To resume the topic, the sub-commentator says:

> The word 'Hadaya-rūpa' does not mean 'Hadaya-vatthu' but the muscle of the heart. This is said to be externally like the bud of a lotus, internally like a Kosātaki fruit. Within this the said blood is found. Upon this base of (circulating) blood the heart-organ (hadaya vatthu) operates.

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The mind cannot arise on the base of a material object like the muscle of the physical heart, but there will be no objection if a subtle heart-organ be accepted for the purpose. It is plain that the acceptance of a physical organ as the base of psychic phenomenon observable in mental operations is hardly compatible with the later development of higher Buddhist thinking.

There was presumably some reason Abhidhammic in doing so. For a mind without a base, if operable, would be as undetectable as the mind in the four formless states; such a mind as this could not be located in terms of the physical body; the baseless mind would be hardly traceable in or to any physical body in any regular plane of existence. Even in the form state or region the subtle heart-organ is hereby accepted and present. This is therefore the medium of our attempt at knowing the mind of others through our own mind sooner or later. There would thus be no mind in the world beyond the ken of this mind-to-mind knowledge. And this vision is truly worth being visualized, realized, and fulfilled.

Inferential Method through Heart-Blood

The observation of the colour of the heart-blood and thereby detecion of mental states appear to be a method of inference. In our day-to-day life also we often resort to a sort of inferential method, through the gross observation of another's bodily changes and vocal expressions. But the yogic method is subtle and infallible; for it is difficult to belie the inner moods, emotions. and reactions to an observation directed to the very source of such mental formations. The observation of the colour of blood within the heart base seems to have been introduced later; for we do not find its mention textually in connection with this knowledge.

The description (Niddesa) of the Mind-to-mind (ceto-pariya) knowledge (1. 52) section in the *Paṭisambhida-magga* contains a short passage about how one organizes this knowledge. The last three sentences of this passage are evidently borrowed by Buddhaghosa from this source and integrated into his work. The sub-commentator has quoted the first sentence and commented thereon, but has not mentiontioned the original source. The sentences in question are as follows:

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"This rūpa is originated from a faculty of joy; this rūpa is originated from the faculty of grief; this rūpa is originated from the faculty of indifference; so does the monk know." The word, rūpa, does not imply the heart-blood in this context. If our savant has taken it to mean 'blood' so has another savant, Upatissa, done thus: "This colour proceeds from the faculty of joy; this colour proceeds from fear; this colour proceeds from the faculty of equanimity (p. 220). The correspondence of both the interpretations to the source shows that the inferential method through the heart-blood was fairly current in their times.

This device is after all, that of inference, as our sub-commentator, the elder Dhapla, says: "By investigating — means 'by directing at first the knowledge through inference'. This sort of inference will be rather not compatible with a yogic method. Buddhaghosa has not meant it. He advises us to direct our attention to the heart-base, the seat of the arising of mind and mind-consciousness. The heart-base is not only the seat of mind and mind-consciousness, but also the seat of the passive mind called 'Bhavaṅga' the life-continuum. The Miscellany of the Vipāka-Uddhāra-kathā of the commentary of the First Book of the Abhidhamma has given us six short parables illustrating the mental operation with the help of matter.

In short, these parables give us some clear idea about the mind and its operation thus:

> The mind is lying asleep (passive) in the middle of the five senses; the stimulus strikes the bodily sense-organ; this disturbs the passive mind and its displacement occurs; then cognitive process sets in with the mental attention to the cause of the displacement. After the regular run of the cognitive process, the mind again returns to the passive state of Bhavaṅga, based on the 'Hadaya-vatthu' ... In the striking of the sense-organ by the stimulus, the mind based on the 'Hadaya-rūpa-vatthu' or the material heart-base, arises prior to the mind connected with the sense-organ ...

The above illustrations show that the mind, basic, passive, or active, operates located anyhow on the heart-bese, and not

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unlocated. This is why our savant draws our attention to the heart-blood for concentration in the initial stage of the practice. This is hence worthwhile. But, after all, it is anomalous to explain the correspondence of the colour of the heart-blood with or to the different moods of mind. The sub-commentator does not try to explain this point; he however does the more intricate question as to how the physical colour indicates the immaterial mood of mind as follows:

> How does one investigate the immaterial (arūpa) mind (citta) by seeing the colour of the blood (of the heart) through divine eye? ... How does the action-born (kammaja) blood get various colours (corresponding) with mental moods accompanied with joy etc. ?

These two questions, actual or expected, are answered by him thus:

"And who said so — that that blood is only action-born ? For there are available herein (all) the four agencies of producing the material object ... "These four agencies are — the Mind, Kamma, Food and Weather. Out of these, Food and Weather are obviously natural; Kamma implies the past action done in a former life; these three are what we may call as the agents for producing material or natural objects.

The mind as an agent produces not only the bodily and vocal indications (significant movements, vinatti), but also the four elements and some of their derivatives. The conception of material objects produced by mind (citta-samuṭṭhāna) is unique in the *Abhidhamma*. It is not an idealistic conception; for the material objects exist independent of mind and are said to be incapable of being eliminated by either insight or concentration. Nevertheless the mind is said to produce the material objects during its cognitive process, as the other three agents, kamma (action), āhāra (food or sustenance), and utu (weather or natural causes), produce them in a way not very different from what we see in nature. The agency of kamma (former action) has of course some ideological connotation; but it makes no difference to what we have internally and externally in our body and external world. For instance, whether the body is or was produced

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by our former action or by the laws of nature, the body would be or remain the same as it is.

Upatissa's Method of Comparing Heart-blood

The method of inferring mental moods or dispositions by comparing the colour of the heart-blood appears to us to be a sort of preposterous suggestion; but, when another savant, Upatissa, also says the same thing, it becomes clear that the method was a bonafide one at least in their times. Mental moods might influence a sort of chemical reaction to the blood, but it may not change its colour to the extent mentioned by our savants. The relative textual passages make little mention of this singular method, nor do we find any such indication in the Master's precept. This is what Upatissa says under the section. 'Knowledge of Others' Thoughts', in the ninth chapter (pp. 220-221):

> He (the new yogin) sees the colour of his own heart through divine sight. Through this colour he perceives his own states of consciousness; and knows through the changes in colour the changes in his own mind: 'This colour proceeds from the faculty of joy; this colour proceeds from the faculty of fear; this colour proceeds from the faculty of equanimity.' Then the experience gained through the observation of his own blood-colour is directed to the heart of others to obtain the disposition of the latter. It is quite logical and not different from the method of Buddhaghosa. But the real difficulty arises when the resulting colour in the two methods is different.
>
> According to the description of Upatissa, in joy, the heart is of the colour of curds and ghee... (in) melancholy, it (the heat) is purple in colour... (in) equanimity, it (the heart) is of the colour of honey... (in) lustful desire, it (the heart) is yellow in colour... (in) anger, it (the heart) is black in colour... (in) ignorance, it (the heart) is muddy in colour... (in) connfidence and knowledge, it (the heart) is pure in colour...

Buddhaghosa on the other hand does not give us so many

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colours, but what he has given does not tally with that of Upatissa.

As already stated, Buddhaghosa says that in joy the blood is red like the ripe fruit of a banyan tree, in grief it is black like the ripe rose-apple, and in indifference it is clear like sesame oil. The comparison with these two mental concomitants, joy and grief, as given in the two descriptions stated above, would show that the inference is uncertain through the colour of the blood alone. This appears to have been recognized even by Upatissa; for he says further:

"Having aroused the knowledge of others' thoughts, he leaves off attending to the changes of colour and holds to the heart only as object. That yogin practises thus. Therefore his mind becomes pure." The sub-commentator of the *Visuddhimagga* says: "The instructions of seeing the heart-blood, etc. are really given for (or in respect of) the beginners (Adikammika)." With respect to this practice of seeing the colour of blood, he says: "Having known the mind of person, he (the yogin) enables himself to know other minds without resorting to the preliminary (parikamma)." This is as much as to say that the observation of blood or its colour is only a preliminary practice in order to set one's heart against another's.

The heart (hadaya) is regarded as base (vatthu) for the arising of both the basic and higher minds in the *Abhidhamma*. It is to be noticed here that the heart is not the originator of mind; it is only the base upon which the consciousness of mind is said to arise. How does it arise ? It of course arises through causes and not without them. But in the material and form spheres the heart-base (Hadaya-vatthu) gross and subtle respectively is present. Upatissa, however, does not specifically mention the heart-base; instead of this he does "the basis of the material element" (p. 241).

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XIII

Organisation of Mind-to-mind Knowledge

Textual Description

THE TEXTUAL sequence of different jhānas, samāpattis, and supernormal branches of knowledge is and may be regarded as a natural sequence of organizing them. But the instances in the text itself show that the sequence does not hold good in many cases of their accomplishment. We shall at first take up the Paṭṭhāna, the last book of the *Abhidhamma*, to show that the mind-to-mind (ceto-pariya) knowledge is a bonafide dhamma in Buddhism. It will be enough to present here the condition of support as stimulus or object (ārammaṇa-paccaya) in the first book of the said Paṭṭhāna:

> The disciple or the outsider (Puthujjana) knows the mind of someone possessed of morally good mind through the mind-to-mind knowledge (I.7.352 under Ārammaṇa-paccaya)... Hence morally good heaps (khandhas) serve as the condition of support as object for the mind-to-mind knowledge (in the same place).

This short sentence shows that the said knowledge is bonafide. Similarly, in the following eight paragraphs (353-360) the same thing is said mutatis mutandis with regard to morally

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evil and natural minds. In like manner, we find the paragraphs (III.7. 92 to 94; and IV. 7. 52 to 54) mention the mind-to-mind knowledge. This is at least an internal proof of the said knowledge being really under operation in early Buddhism.

It is to be remembered that the term mentioned above, 'Ārammaṇa', or support, or stimulus, or object of perception, conception, and cognition, should be understood as appropriate to the context. I have sometimes avoided an equivalent word and used another, if the former was likely to confuse the real import of the original Pāli term. Thus the term, 'ceto-pariya', or mind-penetration, has been translated as 'mind-to-mind' for better or easier comprehension.

The fifth book of the *Abhidhamma*, Kathāvatthu, contains a section entitled Citta-ārammaṇa Kathā. It refutes the theory of the Aṅdhakas (commentary hereupon) who are said to hold that this knowledge belongs to the support or object (Āramma a) of mind only. The text has displayed at length that this knowledge is wider than that, inasmuch as it knows the concomitants of mind besides the mind itself.

The definite mention of this knowledge is found in the Vīmansaka sutta (I.47) of the *Majjhima* and the Nālanda sutta (47.12) of the *Samutta*. In a similar vain we find the Sampasadaniya sutta (III.5) of the *Dīgha* mention this knowledge. But the full description of the knowledge is given in the two suttas, Sāmañña-phala sutta (I.2) and Subha sutta (I.10) of the same *Dīgha Nikāya*. This knowledge is counted as one of the five supernormal branches of knowledge. The term, 'ceto-pariya ñāṇa' is textually enlarged as 'cetasā ceto paricca, pajānāti' meaning 'one knows by fully grasping the mind (of another) through (one's own) mind.'

The textual mention and description of this knowledge as given above leave no doubt that it was really practised and acquired by many disciples of the Master during his life-time. Not only among the members of the Saṅgha, this sort of knowledge was gained even by the art (vijjā) of Maṇikā, which the commentary understands as Cintāmaṇi, or the thought-gem. In Hindu mythology this gem is known as a wish-fulfilling stone, or charm; but the textual import obviously indicates an art that makes one know the thought of other persons.

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The section of the Ādesanā-pāṭihāriya of the Kevaṭṭa sutta (I.11 *Dīgha*) presenting the adverse view says:

> Well, there is verily an art (vijjā) named Maṇikā; thereby that monk might be telling the mind of other persons, telling the mental concomitants (of theirs), telling the mental speech (vittakita) also, and telling the thinking (vicārita) also—'so is your mind, like this is your mind, this is your thought.'

The Master is herein explaining to a Buddhist layman named Kevaṭṭa as to how the exhibition of a real supernormal power might be misrepresented as a magical art. This event took place in the Mango-grove of Pāvārika in Nālandā.

This sutta further gives us the information that this mind-to-mind knowledge was not merely the knowing of the moods and dispositions of mind, but the mental deliberations in vitakka and vicāra also. The textual passage and/or Buddhaghosa tries to give us an impression that it is to know the mental moods only as we find in the section of the observation of the mind in the Sati-paṭṭhāna sutta. Evidently, the Master's displeasure expressed in the above Kevaṭṭa sutta at the public exhibition of supernormal power and knowledge has or might have greatly toned the legitimate description of these powers and branches of knowledge in the text as well as in the commentary.

Nevertheless, the simile of the reflexion of the face upon a mirror in this connection indicates that this knowledge is and must have been what we understand by it, that is, the clear realization of another's mental state and operation at a glance. The Master is said to have possessed this sort of mind-to-mind knowledge and actually found to have done so. The simile is found in the above two suttas (I.2 and 10) of the *Dīgha*, to be discussed in the next section. It is strange that our savants have not given this simile in their works. Instead, they have resorted to seeing the heart-blood as an initial practice.

This might convince the reader that this knowledge was once a common experience of many monks and nuns of the then Order. We have little information about the laymen and lay-women having acquired this knowledge. The canon seems to have eliminated anything that might show that the important feats

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of meditation and insight could be acquired and maintained by the lay disciples of the Master without entering the Order, as homeless mendicants. There were many highly qualified men and women who were even highly praised by the Master, but they were seldom given any credit for acquiring supernormal power except the harmless power of friendliness out of the practice of 'Brahma-vihāra'; while several laymen were fully and freely recognized as earners of the third stage of the supramundane insight. It should be remembered that even the Master's cousin and attendant, the elder Ānanda, remained at the first stage only, so long as the Master was alive.

In a regular preaching, the Master used to describe the principal dhammas including the supernormal power and branches of knowledge to clergy and laity alike. Hence we cannot but think that many young and even old people might have been attracted towards the power and knowledge the Master spoke of so naturally. Then there is no reason why the laity should have proved so unresponsive to them as the textual and commentatorial literature would have us believe. It appears that the tradition of elders did not want to show that these powers, if acquired at all, could be organized and obtained by any laymen.

The result of such attitude as the above had an adverse affect on the clergies themselves. For these powers, kept away from the laity presumably, went gradually out of the regular practice of the clergy as well. As otherwise there is no reason why the common phenomena of those early times should have been so rare and unheard of at present. If these powers were only imaginative even then, it would be unthinkable to account for the existence of the huge literature both textual and commentatorial on the subject. Bereft of these powers, the Master's system would have produced only the candidates for the attainment of Sukkhā (dry) or Suddha (pure) Vipassana-yānika (practiser of insight) or Vipassaka (insight-practiser) without the semblance of jhāna, samāpatti, and samādhi. This is unthinkable of the Master's system.

The quest of the Shākya Prince oft-repeated in his autobiographical accounts shows that he was bent upon achieving something unheard of before, unobtained by anyone, and undiscovered anywhere. And, if we read the accounts carefully, there

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is scarcely any doubt to believe that he fully realized what he quested for. When he got what he sought, he gave it all openly in general assemblies. The Master has declared to his attendant monk, Ānanda, in the village of Veluva or Beluva near Vesāli, seven months before his decease thus:

> What else do the Order of Monks (including that of nuns), Ānanda! expect (to get) from me? Preached (already), Ānanda! (is) by me the dhamma, having done (so keeping anything) neither inside nor outside, Ānanda! in the dhammas there is no teacher's closed fist of the Tathāgata (me, the Buddha).

This is what we find in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta (II. 3 *Dīgha*). The commentary explains this short passage as follows:

> Neither inside nor outside—with regard to dhamma, person, or both, having not done so. If one thinks; 'This much dhamma I shall not preach to another;' this means that he keeps (that much) dhamma inside. If one thinks: 'This much I shall preach to another:' this means that he makes (that much) dhamma outside. If one thinks: 'I shall preach to this person;' this means that he keeps the person inside. If one thinks: 'I shall not preach to this (person);' this means that he keeps the person outside. It is preached without doing so; this is the meaning (of the sentence).
> The teacher's closed fist (Ācariya-muṭṭhi)—as there is the teacher's closed fist of the outsiders. Not telling anyone (of the disciples) in the youthful time, they (the outsiders) at the last time (when) laid on the death-bed tell the beloved disciple (the secret). Thus the Tathāgata has nothing kept as a closed first thinking, that is 'I shall tell it in the old age at the last time; (in the meantime) I am going to carry it along in a closed fist.'

This clearly shows that The Buddhist canon cannot claim anything as secret or reserved for the select few. If some or any persons or sects say so, it is counterfeit.

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Master's Method of Organization

We have seen in the previous chapters how this knowledge is organized starting from the observation of the colour of blood circulating in the heart. Both our savants, Buddhaghosa and Upatissa, say however that this sort of practice is meant for the novice. The sub-commentator, Dhammapāla, adds to it a suggestion of inference. The Paṭisambhidāmagga, the 12th book of the *Khuddaka-nikāya*, has a section entitled 'Description of the Mind-to-mind Knowledge' (Ceto-pariyañāṇa-niddesa) under the Ñāṇa kathā (I. 1. 52. 258) that has a different tale to tell which is given below.

The said section of the above-mentioned book advises us to organize the four iddhi-pādas as a preliminary step not only for this knowledge but also for the rest of the five branches of knowledge. These four iddhi-pādas are generally found in the text and even highly recommended by the Master himself in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta. This subject has been already dealt with in the section 'Definition of Iddhi and Iddhipāda' in the second chapter of the third phase of this research.

Textually viewed, this device has a close affinity to the jhāna; consequently this is not seriously treated of by our savant. He has rightly insisted on the foundation trance, which is nothing more than the four form trances. Really speaking, this device is so much confused with the jhāna and jhānic effort or vigour that its separate utility as iddhi has been lost in the above two elements or factors. The purpose of practising these four iddhipādas is stated to make the mind softened and workable evidently towards the supernormal power.

After making the mind softened and workable through the practice of these iddhi-pādas, the said book, Paṭisambhidāmagga, says:

> He (the practising monk) knows thus:—'This form is arisen from the faculty of joy; this form is arisen from the faculty of grief; this form (rūpa) is arisen from the faculty of indifference. By such a cultivated and purified mind, he (the practising monk) directs and bends the mind for the mind-to-mind knowledge. He knows, through encompassing the mind of other beings and of other persons by his own mind, it thus.

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Then there follow all the sixteen kinds of mental states exactly as found in the observation of mind in the Sati-paṭṭhāna sutta.

These sixteen kinds of mental states, however, are scarcely applicable to the ordinary mental states in the material world. They are broad and general, not narrow and particular as we would like to know. It is strange that Buddhaghosa does not replace the textual passage in full at first and mentions the first phrase only—"By means of the attached (mind) etc. in many ways." It is not clear as to what he means by the insertion of the last phrase, 'in many ways,' not found in the text. When he further comments, he does so on the very textual kinds. This again shows that he does not deviate from the traditional line.

Upatissa, however, mentions the presence and absence of loving kindness (sarāga?) and hate (sadosa) only. Moreover, he has integrated the eight objects, that is, supports or extents of this knowledge in this very section; whereas Buddhaghosa treats of them and that in full detail in the Miscellany (Pakiṇṇaka). This will be enough to show that the latter savant is much more methodical than the former one.

As already mentioned, the full textual detail of organizing this knowledge is found in the two suttas, Sāmaññā-phala and Subha (I. 2 and 10) of the *Dīgha*. The former or first of the two suttas was preached to King Ajātasattu by the Master, while the latter or second sutta was preached to Subha Māṇava (student) by Ānanda one month after the demise of the Master. Except the introductory portion (nidāna), interlocutory word and passage, and ending, the main body of the precept, from Indriya-samvara to Āsava-khaya-ñāṇa, corresponds to each other in words, phrases, sentences, and similes.

The first sutta was preached by the Master in the Mango-forest of Jīvaka, the famous physician and surgeon, in Rajagaha; the listener was King Ajatasattu, the one-time patron of Devadatta, the schismatic Shākya. The king survived eight years the Master's Great Passing away; the Introductory Story (Nidāna Kathā) of the Commentary of the *Vinaya* writes:

> In the eighth year (of the coronation) of Ajātasattu, the Samma Sambuddha passed away into Nibbāna. In the same year the son of Sīhakumāra, the first king of Tambapaṇṇi (Ceylon)

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> Island, having come over this island populated it with men... In the 17th year of King Asoka...Devānāmpiya Tissa (of Sri Lankā) was crowned king...After the Passing away of the Blessed One (the Buddha) Ajātasattu reigned for twenty-four years...In the eighteenth year of the coronation (of King Asoka) the Elder Mahinda was established in this island... According to the Royal annals it should be known: in the thirty-sixth year above two hundred years from the passing away of the Samma Sambuddha, he (Mahinda) was established in this island.

This account is given here to help trace the original text available in Pāli to what the historical Buddha might have preached for forty-five years of his later life.

The second sutta was preached in Savatthi to Subha Māṇava, the son of Todeyya, by Ananda; this took place later just one month after the Master's demise. The commentary gives us an interesting story of this rich Brāhmaṇa, Todeyya, the landlord of Tudi village not far from Sāvatthi. This Brāhmaṇa was very rich but at the same time miserly to the extreme. He was born after his death as a dog in his own house. The Master one day tried to revive the memory of this dog to his past birth. The son, Subha Māṇava, heard it and was angry with the Master. He said:

"My father is (or rather must have been) born in Brahmaloka, (the region of higher heavenly beings); but Samaṇa Gotama makes my father a dog; he speaks whatever comes to his mouth." Thus enraged, he went to the Vihāra (monastery) in order to challenge the Master for speaking a lie and asked him about it. The Master told him what he had said before; but for his certainty the Master asked him: "Is there any treasure, Māṇava! not intimated by your father?" He replied: "Yes there is, Bho (Honoured) Gotama! there are, to wit, a gold-garland (necklace) worth a hundred-thousand, a gold-sandal worth a hundred-thousand, and a coin worth a hundred-thousand." Thereupon the Master told him how he should get the information thereof from the dog. Subbha did what he was told to do and got the information of the hidden treasure. He was convinced and converted to Buddhism.

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The above commentatorial story may or may not be as verifiable as we would have liked it to be. There are, however, several stories resembling the story given above. These complexes are hardly digestible to our modern stomach. Whatever be the implication, any belief in these theories is not required beforehand in order to do something worthwhile in the Master's system under research. We shall, however, lose nothing, if we try to gain this mind-to-mind knowledge, which presupposes a sort of practice in jhāna or samādhi. Anyone gaining a foothold in this sort of meditation is promised a sojourn in the form region, known as Brahmaloka, with memory of this life.

Thus we return to the Master's method of organizing this knowledge as given in the first of the two suttas, Samaññaphala, the fruit of the renunciation. The Master says:

> In such a mind concentrated, purified, cleansed, clarified, freed from defects and defilements, softened, made workable, become firm, and established in steadiness, he (the practising monk) directs and bends the mind towards the gaining of the Mind-to-mind Knowledge. Encompassing the mind of other beings and persons by (his own) mind, he knows—the mind with attachment as the mind with attachment...
> so on and so forth...

This instruction is given here after the organization and achievement of the successive four form trances, as it is done for each of the powers and branches of knowledge—the realization of knowledge regarding the separation of mind and body, the creation of mind-made body, iddhi-vidhā, divine-ear, the remembrance of past lives, divine eye, and the knowledge of Liberation. Hence the form trance has been regarded as the foundation trance for the organization of Buddhist meditation, power, knowledge, and insight. Nothing of importance in Buddhist yoga and insight can evidently be gained without this particular trance.

The reason is plain; most of the powers and branches of knowledge operate in the form plane or state; the form trance is the only means of gaining an access into this mystic region; the organization of form trance is not difficult, for it is quite

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natural and normal in any mind free from ordinary defect and defilement called nīvaraṇas. These nīvaraṇas are generally given as *five* in number, viz., desire, hatred, torpor, fickleness and remorsefulness, and doubt. These are said to be the defects of mind impeding the emergence of jhāna. From a close study of jhāna, samādhi, or yoga in Buddhism or *Yogasūtra*, it appears that a state of samādhi is natural to every human mind; it is the in-coming impediment that scatters, checks, covers, retards, and dissipates the normal state, respectively.

In the five short suttas (I. 5.—8, 9, 10 suttas; I. 6.—1, 2 suttas) of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, the Master says:

> I do not see, Monks! a single dhamma that is so swift to move as the mind...Brilliant is this mind, Monks! but this is defiled by the incoming defilements. Brilliant is this mind, Monks! which is freed from the incoming defilements...The uninformed outsider does not properly know it. Hence I say that the uninformed outsider has no mental development (Bhāvanā). Having heard this, the noble disciple knows it properly. Hence I say that the informed noble disciple has the mental development.

This unusual statement of the Master clearly shows that a state of jhānic meditation is normal and should be within the reach of us all. It is only necessary to know this truth the Master has disclosed above. We shall investigate other views also.

Other Views on this Subject

The doctrine of yoga as found in the *Yogasūtra* of Patañjali, the old commentary of Vyāsa thereon accepts the Sāṅkhya philosophy for its metaphysical data. But the devices the former has given appear to have been collected from different sources without acknowledging them. This is because they were extant then and thought to be efficient for the purpose. The author has, however, advanced his own eight fold path as Buddhaghosa has done the ten kasiṇas. It should be always borne in mind that the main instrument of yoga, meditation and insight is the mind. The nature of mind should therefore

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be rightly understood. The Master has spoken the truth in the above five short suttas, and so has been done in the Sūtra (I. 1.) and its commentary as below:

"Yoga is samādhi; this is the property (dharma) common to all the states of mind (sārva-bhaumah cittasya dharma)." But of these states, the most important is the state of concentration (ekagrah); for, among others, it brings the mind towards the cessation (nirodha) of mental formations, the commentator explains. Moreover, the comment on the 36th sūtra says: "The highest mind (buddhisattva) is radiant (bhāsvara) like the sky (pervading)." The sub-commentator, Vācaspati Miśra, explains; "And the mind (manas) is intended here by Buddhi, not the great element (mahat-tattva)." But another sub-commentator, Vijñāna Bhikṣu, enlarges it thus: "The buddhi-element is radiant; it illuminates itself and other like light; it becomes pervading like the sky (space) as well." The sum and substance of these statements is to show that the mind itself is capable of performing what we desire in the mental field.

On the mind-to-mind knowledge, the *Yogasūtra* (III. 19) gives us a short sūtra—'The knowledge of others' mind is gained (by the realization) of Pratyaya (own or others' mental experience).' The commentary is not elucidatory more than the sūtra. Neither is the sub-commentator, Miśra, giving us anything more than the above. It is of course Bhikṣu who gives us a very good explanation. But Bhojadeva has given us a short but significant implication of the sūtra. He says:

> When one concentrates on another's mind grasped by some sign of happiness, attachment, etc., then there arises the knowledge of another's mind, (like) with attachment is his mind, or without attachment. The meaning is this—he knows the elements dwelt on by that another's mind as well.

This is evidently in conformity with the Pāli text. But in the last portion he is wonderful and has fully disclosed his import in explaining the next sūtra.

The next sūtra restricts the application of the mind-to-mind knowledge to the mental moods and dispositions only; it does

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not know the individual objects of another's mind. The sūtra (III. 20) says: "It (the pratyaya) is not with its object; for it has not made the object its own." This is tantamount to saying that the yogin knows another's mind but not its object, to which only the latter mind is directly oriented, not the mind of the yogin. The yogin only knows the mood of another's mind.

The commentary also says the same thing as above. The sub-commentator, Miśra, follows the commentary in the same vein. But another sub-commentator, Bhojadeva, adds a unique idea to the usual one given above. He says: "The mental elements (dharmas) are surely grasped. When he (the yogin) reflects—what object is grasped by this (person)? Then he concentrating thereon arouses the knowledg: thereof." It is what it should be; we also expect that much by this knowledge, not merely the moods and dispositions. Vijñāna Bhikṣu, however, ingeniously proves that it is so; for in the first one he says: If one entirely and particularly realizes one's own mind with its objects, he thereby realizes similarly another's mind even through the resolve only.

Critical Study of the Master's Device

The Master in the said sutta (I. 2. *Dīgha*) has given us a multipurpose foundation trance, upon which we are to direct and bend our mind towards the mind-to-mind knowledge. He had already given us the method of observing the mind of our own in the Sati-paṭṭhāna sutta (II. 9. *Dīgha* and I. 10 *Majjhima*). The form trance begins with vitakka and vicāra in the first stage, without these two in all the higher stages, and finally immerses into the cessation of mind (feeling and consciousness) altogether. Surely the gradual trances would not have time and inclination for a diversion into this knowledge.

So from the very first trance we shall have to attune it to another's mind. If the interest in this knowledge be kept alive, the form trance would automatically be oriented to this knowledge. The attempt thus be gradually adjusted to the clarity of what we seek or desire. The simile given by the Master in this sutta may be helpful in our attempt. He says:

For example Mahārāja! as a woman, or a man, yong youthful

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well-ornamented, looking into a mirror, or into a pure, clean, and clear water-pot, and reviewing his own face should know it with a mole, if it be with a mole; without a mole, if it be without a mole; in the same manner Mahārāja! the monk ..encompassing the mind with (his own) mind knows the mind of other beings and other persons...

The clear visualization of mind, whatever it be, is the aim we have to set our heart on. It is not merely the knowing of another's mental deliberation, as said to be knowable also through the Maṇika vijjā or art mentioned above. The realization of minds other than that of one's own should not deviate from the regular path of higher knowledge and insight. The Master would not have tolerated any one of his disciples wandering and losing himself amongst minds engaged into diverse worldly questions and affairs. It is clear that we should also be wary of such excursions in this practice. It is possible that we might be detected therein and even get a just reproof from some source hidden just at present. It is, however, only our imagination.

We can never imagine that the Master would be watching either the colour of another's heart-blood or any bodily change of another person in order to know the mind under his observation. He would do as it is given in the said sutta and forthwith know what he wants to know. This knowledge seems to have been closely related to that of divine ear or hearing, of which we have several instances in the text. When someone is thinking in the mind, it might be either in mental speech or concept; the former will be heard through the divine ear and the latter through this knowledge; the instances of both these categories are found in the text.

The Master has often tried, wanted or intentionally sought to verify what he has learnt or known through supernormal knowledge. And the text says that it came true. Probably for fear of disclosure, even the principal disciples of the Master scarcely displayed their capacity to hear, see, and know things supernormally before the people in general except on certain unusual occasions. Not only from the Thera and Theri Gāthās, or Songs of Monks and Nuns, but also from the text and the

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commentary, we find that this knowledge is included in their achievement. We have at present no means to verify this knowledge objectively, excepting the presentation of internal evidence in the text and the commentary of the Buddhist literature and other sources as far as available. There is, however, no harm if we take it tentatively.

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XIV

Remembrance of One's Own Past Birth

One Birth versus Round of Births: General Principles

BUDDHISM, LIKE almost all other Oriental philosophies, speaks of a round of birth other than the current birth. We had, says the Buddhist theory of rebirth, many a round of births in the past and shall also have many in the future, if the link of the cause of rebirth be not broken by the attainment of the knowledge of liberation. The current birth, life, or existence of ours, according to this doctrine, is the resultant of our past life; this is again the resultant of the farther past life we led; this was again the resultant of the still farther past; so on and so forth backward to an unfathomably obscure past (anamataggoyam samsāro). The very first starting point of this series is not known (pubbā koṭi na paññāyati).

There is no break in this series of rebirths. For the laws stronger than powers human or divine are said to have been regulating them since time immemorial. These laws are in short those of kamma or fruit-bearing action and its resultant or vipāka or fruition. The kamma thus determines its vipāka, but not vice versa; for a vipāka cannot produce another vipāka by itself. Moreover, the vipāka is morally neutral and after its consummation lies inert. The fruits in a vipāka might be varied, but their nature remains the same in being morally neutral. The

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vipāka, however dazzling, is intrinsically of neutral value morally, according to the *Abhidhamma*.

It is only the kamma that can create a vipāka; the creator of a vipāka is the kamma; the doer of an action is an individual. Hence Buddhism places the responsibility for what an individual is upon the individual himself. The Master's precept to Ānanda, his cousin and constant attendant, in the last year (II. 9. *Dīgha*) points to this idea:

"Here, therefore, Ānanda! dwell depending upon yourself as a place of safety (atta-dīpa), yourself as a refuge (atta-saraṇā), not upon others as a (refuge anatta-saraṇā); upon the Dhamma as a place of safety, as a refuge, not upon others as a refuge".

How are we to depend upon ourselves? The Master himself has given the answer to the question in the same sutta. He says further: "How is it, Ānanda! that a monk dwells depending upon himself...? Here, Ānanda! a monk dwells observing the body...the feeling...the mind...the Dhammas (as given in the Sati-paṭṭhāna-sutta)." This is as much as to say that a Buddhist will have to secure a path to the ultimate goal, nibbāna, by himself. He cannot expect anyone to work for his liberation. This attitude of Early Buddhism, however rational, had to combat a sense of helplessness among the people. Several innovations were introduced in the Dhamma later on, but the original rationale of the Master remains the same.

Thus the law of kamma and its vipāka would necessarily entail an interminable chain of rebirths. We may deny the past births on the ground that we do not remember any of the events connected with such past births and also that several religious teachers of the world have not spoken of such experiences. The first of the two grounds can only be refuted by our own experience through the practice of this knowledge. The second ground is more serious and cannot be satisfactorily met with even by own experience and lots of scriptures against it. The best thing for us, therefore, would be to take the doctrine of rebirth tentatively and proceed with its practice as an experiment in a unique mental field, if we can remember anything of the past events other than those of the present.

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Belief in rebirth however is not necessary for the organization of this knowledge; for those who tried to gain it might have been ignorant as we are in the beginning. The realization of something of unexpected would give us a right lead in this knowledge. Even if we be sceptical about its doctrine, there is possibly no harm in our investigating the subconscious or unconscious mind for a little while. A little pressure of the active remembrance (anussati) upon this dormant mental field may open up a series of recollections extra-ordinary and undeniably personal.

Theory comes in only after the actual experience of a phenomenon. For example, the meditative light has been witnessed by many yogins, Occidental and Oriental, ancient and modern. The theories about it however widely differ. Nevertheless, the light is there and none can deny it. Similarly, something comes before us and strikes us as remotely familiar. This is a sort of phenomenon, but we are not bound to accept it as an evidence or proof of a past birth. Without ascribing it to any psychical abnormality, we may go on developing it to an earnest organization of this knowledge.

In any research work, we are not bound to believe in its preconceived myths and fancies. The research will go on even with or without anything held as a doctrine. By the way, the Master never liked to hold anything as worthy of being held (I. 1. sutta in the *Majjhima*). If so, we cannot blame him for advancing this doctrine apparently anomalous. But the fact is that he himself had undergone such a series of psychic experiences. We can scarcely say that he was under a sort of delusion about these unusual remembrances of events connected with lives other than the present.

The general principles of this knowledge are different from other branches of knowledge in its extent and seriousness. The Master is said to have followed or pushed this knowledge backward to many, many cosmic world cylces beyond any measure and reckoning. He remembered these events so well and so swiftly that we cannot but imagine that he surveyed them visually in a speed surpassing that of a shooting star; the speed might have been gained gradually, as the progressively ascending order of words signifies.

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Naturally this knowledge should combine with the previous branches of knowledge, namely, divine ear, mind-to-mind (his own mind) knowledge and divine eye. For he says that he remembered all those events even in detail, but the speed of remembering them was unbelievably fast. We can but wonder at it and can never hope to attain that sort of speed in remembering a fast moving film-roll. Not only the Master, but there were some monks and nuns in the Order who were reputed for remembering such past events.

The question would arise: Is it possible? We can only cite instances from the text; the instances are there in a good many numbers. We cannot discredit all of them without due consideration. This knowledge gave him an insight into the interminable mystery of life. His first word after his Enlightenment was about his own innumerable rounds of births:

"Many a round of births Have I roamed unremitting..."
(The Dhammapāda Gāthā XI. 8, or verse No. 153).

This very verse has been quoted in other commentaries also as the Master's first word (Buddha-vacana). Hence this must carry some weight and authenticity.

The simile provided by the Master for the comprehension of this knowledge in the second sutta of the *Dīgha-nikāya* is as follows:

> As for example, Mahārāja! a person should go from his own village to another village; from that village also he should go to another village; from that village he should return to his own village. He should (then) think thus: 'I went indeed from my own village to that village; therein I stood thus, I sat down thus, I spoke so, I was silent thus. From that village also I went to that village, there also I stood thus, I sat down thus, I spoke so, I was silent thus. And I am come back from that village to my own village.' In the same way, Mahārāja! one remembers the events of the past birth or life.

Not only this much, but even the practising monk remembers personal and family names he bore then, the bodily complexion

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he had, the kind of food he ate, etc. It is plain that this sort of remembering the past events even of this life is well-nigh impossible through ordinary means and mind. That may be possible only through yogic means, if the literature on the subject is truly based on real experience. It is also true that this kind of remembrance lies beyond our ordinary or normal experience.

Instead of denying it outright, we may examine it on another facet. What is the use or necessity of this knowledge for the present life? Generation after generation, our species have been accumulating experiences, generalizing them, and utilizing them in a move forward. In spite of the rich past, individuals may suffer, while society as a whole may prosper. For the good of society, individuals have or are made to sacrifice themselves. Now yogins cannot be forced to do anything without their free will. The remembrance of the past experience of one or many lives might convince the yogin and through him others of the sociological law or truth as to how society progresses due to the integration of individual efforts.

Moreover, the basic knowledge has contributed much to the development of science and technology. The knowledge gained by yoga and insight is basic to the solution of the riddles of the world. The Master thought so; he might be right; we cannot afford to ignore or overlook what he has found to the full satisfaction of himself and his numerous disciples and admirers. The mere remembrance of the past life would have meant nothing to us, had he not brought it to its logical significance and utility with regard to liberation or nibbāna.

Buddhaghosa on Rembrance of One's Past

In the 13th chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*, Buddhaghosa deals with the four of the six abhiññā or supernormal branches of knowledge mundane and supramundane. The order of treatment is the same as we find in the suttas, but in the Songs of the Monks and Nuns, *Thera* and *Theri Gāthās*, sometimes the order is given differently. The last three of these six branches are the same as given in the oft-repeated three vijjās or knowledges. The last of all is however the knowledge of liberation or nibbāna, attainable only through discriminating insight, the

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summum bonum of Early Buddhism and directly or indirectly of Buddhism in general.

In the section on this knowledge of the anussati or remembrance or recollection of pubbenivāsa or previous dwellings or virtually past lives, Buddhaghosa has dealt with this subject in full detail. The detail for higher minds other than ordinary ones will, I think, not be of our direct concern. We shall have nevertheless to give some information about it in brief. He is evidently commenting on the textual passage found in the Sāmañña-phala sutta (1.2. *Dīgha*) and other suttas. But he has done so with full exposition of world cycles also.

He says:

> Pubbenivāsa means—the aggregates of events experienced in the previous lives. Nivuttha—means dwelt, experienced arisen and ceased in the continuity of one's own (life-series); or, the dhammas so dwelt in; or, dwelt in as a habitual resort and separated and known by one's own consciousness; or separated and known by others' consciousness.

This is as much as to say that all of previous lives have been included in this knowledge. The last phrase needs some explanation. Others' consciousness may include that of those who have already passed away into nibbāna; so he adds: "The following of the consciousness of completely liberated beings including others (the sub-commentary specifies them as pacceka-sambuddhas and Buddha's disciples) is available to the Buddhas only....." This is seemingly stupendous. The text says that the Buddha had such a knowledge of the ideas of former liberated ones including the former Buddhas.

He goes on to say:

> Pubbenivāsa means—beginning the life immediately preceding (this present one), the continuous series (of lives) dwelt in therein. Remembering—means recollecting (the events of) the particulars consecutively, or recollecting (swiftly) the moment of the decease to the birth (and birth to decease, again decease to birth, and so on and so forth).

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From this, we shall have to understand that the remembrance of the past lives is done ordinarily either in a consecutive manner or swiftly from death to birth, skipping over the intermediate events. The first would naturally be slower but particular, while the second would be quicker and general but more difficult.

Buddhaghosa says that six kinds of persons remember their past lives, namely, Titthiyas (outside or non-Buddhist yogins), Buddhist monks, Mahāsāvakas or great disciples who are counted as eighty in number, Aggasāvakas or principal disciples who were two (among the eighty), Pacceka-buddhas, and Buddhas. What he means to say is that these persons are capable of remembering the past lives. Naturally there will definitely be broad gradations of capacity of doing so among them. So he says:

> Therein the Titthiyas (non-Buddhists) remember forty kappas (aeons) only, and not more than that. Why so? It is due to weak intellect (dubbala-paññattā). Due to the absence of (penetrating) discrimination between mind and matter (nāma-rūpa), their intellect is (becomes) weak.

The cause alluded to herein does not appear to be satisfactory or logical. For the capacity of remembering forty world-aeons cannot be so brushed off as weak. The discrimination of mind and matter is not absent (virahita) in other Oriental philosophies. The tradition our savant had to follow must have been so biased; as otherwise he would or should not have ignored the trend of yoga philosophy of Patañjali he is credited with its knowledge.

According to him, the natural (pakati) disciples remember it (as far back as) a hundred kappas, (even) a thousand kappas, while the great disciples do so for a hundred-thousand kappas. The limit of counting kappas in numbers ends in a hundred-thousand. Thereafter the mention of 'asaṅkhyeyya' or an infinitely and immensely large number is made. Technically this term, in connection with the notion of the devolution (sambaṭṭa) and evolution (vivaṭṭa) of cosmic worlds (cakkavālas), means the immensely large period of time taken during the process of devolving; a similarly immense time running as long as the state of devolution is lasting; a similarly enormous period of time

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taken in the process of evolving; and a like immeasurably time running as long as the state of evolution is continuing. Each of those four periods is termed 'asaṅkhyeyya'.

Buddhaghosa has said so. The Kappa sutta (IV. 16. 6 *Aṅguttara-nikāya*) states exactly as our savant has said. He adds that these four immeasurable periods of time make a Mahākappa or a great cosmic aeon. This is plain that a complete cycle of a mahākappa would contain four 'asaṅkhyeyyas'. If so, Buddha ghosa has not solved an apparent mathematical anomaly. According to himself, a pakati disciple and a great disciple cannot remember (the events of) an asaṅkhyeyya. How is it then possible for a natural disciple to remember more than one regular kappa? Or for a great disciple to do the same? The sub-commentator also has not marked this apparent anomaly.

We shall have the same sort of anomaly even in the case of a principal disciple and a pacceka-buddha who can remember only one and two asaṅkhyeyyas, respectively in addition to a hundred-thousand kappas each. There is, however, no limit to the remembering capacity of Buddhas. The text is definite that one can remember many a kappa. At the same time, the text has definitely stated in the first and second suttas of the *Dīgha-nikāya* that there are samvatta and vivatta kappas which even a non-Buddhist yogin can remember to a maximum of forty kappas.

Confusion of Aeons

Buddhaghosa has apparently abstained from reconciling the confusion of aeons, probably due to his unwillingness to meddle with the different textual versions of the kappas. Although the notion of a kappa depends upon a mythological conception of the cosmic world, its devolution or destruction (samvatta), and its evolution (vivatta) or development, we might try to reconcile the Buddhist conception of these aeons from the Pāli text. The first difficulty generally met with is the estimation of the normal duration of a kappa in our physical years; this can be solved in the following manner:

The Section, Āyupppamāṇāni or Measures of Life-span, of the Dhamma-hadaya Vibhaṅga of the second book of the *Abhidhamma*, gives us the number of years in the life-span of

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beings human and divine. From this we can calculate the number of years in a kappa (kalpa in Sanskrit), a normal life-span of a Mahā Brahma of the first Brahmaloka. This is 55.96 billion years; the calculation is textually based on a year of 360 days; the gradually doubling process is also taken to be continued from the last sixth heaven to the lowest limit of the first Brahmaloka of Brahma-pārisajjā Devas.

According to Nāgasena (*Milinda-Pāñha*, part IV, Vagga I.), the Buddha's Saṅgha was broken by Devadatta, when one-sixth of this kappa (Bhadda kappa) elapsed and five-sixths of the kappa were still remaining. So the age of the present cosmic world or Buddha-kappa is 9.216 billion years. This kappa ostensibly lies within the developing period of evolution, the Vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi kappa, for various reasons. One of the reasons is found in the third chapter of the *Lalita-Vistara*; herein it is said that the Bodhisattva descending from the fourth heaven for the last birth does not do so during the time of cosmic devolution: "Nay, the Bodhisattva does not descend into the womb of the mother in the beginning of the world, in the time of beings' devolution (sattva-samvartani-kāla)." We shall discuss this later in the "Master's Device..."

There is another term, 'Antara kappa', mentioned in the commentary on the second sutta of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, in connection with Makkhali Gosāla's startling theory of complete determinism. It is this: "In one kappa there are sixty-four Antara-kappas", not sixty-two as described by him. The sub-commentator, Dhammapāla, commenting on this topic in the *Visuddh-imagga* says: "The asaṅkhyeyya lasting throughout the evolution-period (vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi) is a collection (saṅgaha) of sixty-four Antara-kappas; some say that it is a collection of twenty Antara-kappas; the remaining asaṅkhyeyyas are equivalent to that in time." This would mean that a complete kappa, whether devolving or evolving or lasting throughout, makes up an asaṅkhyeyya or immeasurable aeon.

These sixty-four antara-kappas making up a complete kappa create another problem; for these are too few to explain the one hundred-thousand kappas from now (ito) when Padumuttara Buddha had appeared in the so-called Maṇḍa-kappa. Before him, there flourished twelve Buddhas in separate four

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kappas, each kappa intervened by one asaṅkhyeyya or immesurable one. Then Padumuttara Buddha appeared and flourished. Down from him to Vessabhū Buddha, twelve Buddhas appear in separate seven kappa only out of one hundred-thousand less thirty kappas. No asaṅkhyeyya is said to have intervened in these kappas. Each of these seven kappas is called the Maṇḍa-kappa in the 28th chapter of the Buddha-vamso. In this Buddha-kappa from Kakusandha to Sākyamuni Buddha, there are four Buddhas who appeared, flourished, and disappeared. In future there will appear Metteyya Buddha, as fully described in the Cakkavatti sutta (III. 3.) of the *Dīgha*.

Thus the total of thirty less one Buddhas have their appearance only in twelve kappas during all these four immeasurable kappas and one hundred-throusand measurable kappas. If the reckoning of these measurable aeons be even roughly correct, the appearance of a Buddha is seemingly a very rare event. For there appeared no Buddha for seventy thousand aeons (kappas) from Padumuttara to Sumedha, no Buddha for twenty-eight thousand and two hundred kappas from Sujāta to Piyadassi, no Buddha for seventeen hundred and six kappas from Dhammadassi to Siddhattha, no Buddha for sixty kappas from Vipassi to Sikhi, and no Buddha for thirty kappas from Vessabhū to Kakusandha or the beginning of this Bhadda kappa.

The little we seem to know about these earlier or mythical Buddhas entirely comes from the so-called remembrance of the past lives mostly of the Master; a little information of a few of the former Buddhas is also provided by the remembrance of some competent monks and nuns. In the latter category Buddha Padumuttara is mentioned frequently. The name, Padumuttara, or Paduma the Later, was perhaps used to distinguish him from his predecessor, Paduma. So is the predecessor of our own Buddha, Kassapa.

The Master has said that he used the mind-to-mind knowledge also to know the mind of his predecessors. The method of doing so is not given, but it might have been the method of identifying mind with mind. It is apparently anomalous, but no other methods seem to be so appropriate as his revelation would warrant. The classical instance of verification in a

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comparatively recent case is that of the potter, Ghaṭiākra, the lay disciple of the Kassapa Buddha and the close friend of Jotipāla, who was our Bodhisattva himself then. This instance is given and found in many places of the text itself. By the way this instance may serve as a clue to estimate the temporal period between the recent two Buddhas, Kassapa and Gotama (Gautama in Sanskrit).

Organization Suggested by Buddhaghosa

We have already seen how Buddhaghosa was confident of the kasiṇa method and practice. But the method of remembering or recollecting the past events, as suggested in his work, seems to be simple but very difficult to practise to the extent he has done. He does not give us any indication of how one is to feel that one is progressing in this practice. His persistent instruction to organize the foundation trance again and again, while trying to remember events backward, is presumably academic more than practical. For the foundation trance itself is really more desirable than this knowledge and accordingly more attractive than the mere practice of this unrewarding method.

He has not stated anything that should give us a gradual and definite lead towards the knowledge, as he has done in the kasiṇa. In yogic practice it is the experience that counts, but he has provided us with little information in this direction. If he has given us what he finds or has found in the old commentaries, he should have said so; but he does not directly say so; he advises us as if he is fully confident. He simply suggests a reverse method of remembering past events. But it is more academic than practical; it is not what the Master appears to instruct and indicate in the relative suttas. Moreover it is psychologically untenable.

In the absence of alternative methods, we have to follow what he says with the hope that he might have given us the version of the old commentaries. Nevertheless we may adjust his method in the light of the Master's definite instruction. The sub-commentator also does not try to comment upon the method as we would have liked him to do. The method Upatissa has expounded in his work mostly resembles that

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of our savant, that is, the reverse order rolling backwards. We shall see if we can improve upon this reverse method suggested by both the savants. But the test of the method would be the correct reproduction of the events through remembrance of this very life.

The main trend of the method suggested by Buddhaghosa is as follows :

> Hence the beginner (ādikammika) monk, who is desirous of remembering so (as said above), should, after food and relieved of going round for alms, seek a lonely place for calm meditation. He should bring about the four jhānas, one by one in usual order. Having arisen from the fourth form trance basic to the attainment of supernormal knowledge (Abhiññā-pādaka), he (the beginner) should advert to the last of his sittings.

The last seat is rightly explained to be the seat from which the practice begins, by the sub-commentator. It means that the beginner should start the practice from the very place and moment he finds himself in.

> Then he should advert to the arrangement of (how he arranged) the seat, the entry (how he entered) into the cell, the putting aside of the pot and robe (How he put the pot and robe aside), the time of taking the food, the time of coming from the village, the time of roaming for alms in the village, the time of entering the village for alms, the time of exit from the Monastery, the time of worshipping in the yards of the shrine (cetiya) and the Bodhi Tree.

In short, from his seat at the moment, the beginner is advised to remember vividly everything he did backwards to the time he performed his worship at the shrine and started for the daily round and ultimately came over and sat down for the practice.

And similarly from the time of worship backwards to his morning, evening, and night duties and works, he advises us to remember:

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The time of the washing of the pot, the time of the taking up of the pot, from the taking up (of the pot) till the necessary work of washing the face, the necessary work (done) in the early morning, the necessary work (done) in the last part of the night, and the necessary work (done) in the first part of the night (as the second part is passed in sleeping).

The entire items enumerated above would evidently include the works from the mid-day backward to the previous evening, covering a period of about eighteen hours.

Thus in the reverse order the beginner should advert to the necessary work (done) in the whole day and night. This much however becomes patent even to (through) the natural (pakati, that is, ordinary) mind (of a beginner). To (through) the mind (engaged) in the preparatory samādhi however it becomes very patent.

The above items remembered backward should be clearly seen or recollected even ordinarily, if the method be correct. This will be the test of this method as well. We shall see later on that the consecutively reverse order of remembering past events is not a natural and practical order even in our day-to-day experience, not to speak of yogic experience.

If nothing becomes patent herein, then again the beginner should produce the basic trance and rising therefrom advert to (all the above items). By this much (of the reorganized trance), it becomes patent like the burning of a lamp. In such a reverse order, the beginner should advert to the work done (by him) the second day also, the third, fourth, and fifth day also, (back to) tenth day also, half a month also, a month also, till an entire year as well.

Evidently, such practice as this cannot be practical at present. Buddhaghosa must have been aware of the impracticability of such practice, even if given in the traditional commentaries, as our savant had to repeat.

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It appears that the tradition of serious yogic practices, Buddhistic or other Oriental, makes a beginner undergo an arduous task at first. It might have been for the sake of preparing or testing him for higher achievement in yoga and insight. As a matter of fact, the period of training in yoga is generally made so as to put away the less serious or less enthusiastic ones who might bring the yoga to people's ridicule. Hence we should not be unduly scared away by initial hurdles put or come before us. For, if these practices were such as loom through these instructions, there would have been very few converts and candidates in early Buddhism. Many of the successful ones in Buddhism do not appear to be more intelligent than many of the modern intelligentsia. What they could do then, if they really did, can be performed even now.

The reverse order of remembering past events, as described by Buddhaghosa, is useful to understand how we are to go back in time. The remembering of past events will have to be done mostly in past scenes or events; for a device of deliberation would be neither available, efficient, nor sufficiently quick to cover a long series of past recollections. So a vivid idea of the past will have to be gained by deliberately thinking backwards, as our savant has described so laboriously above. His method of remembering is, however, tantamount to the follwing procedure or something like that.

"Move backward slowly with the back as if ahead or in front, while keeping the eyes watching each step and mental space retraced or being retraced." When we have to move back in time for this sort of remembrance, the backward mental steps will have to be retraced from the starting place and moment to the remembered place and time. Time alone can be scarcely conceived without the corresponding conception of place or spatial event or imaginary space. Mental movement will also be necessary for the purpose. This is not the way we have accumulated our experience of items or events in the past. Now we remember what we have already stored as the items or events of past experience. These things should be remembered one by one backwards in the reverse order, as our savant has fully described in his method given above. But

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this is perhaps even psychologically untenable; the text is found otherwise.

Suggestion of Organization by Upatissa

The method of organizing 'The Five Forms of Higher Knowledge' is described in the ninth chapter of the *Vimutti-magga* by the Elder Upatissa. Under the section. 'Recollection of Past Lives', he has suggested the method of organizing this knowledge. The method is not very different from that of the Elder Buddhaghosa. The arrangement of descriptions given by the former is rather mixed and in a way confusing and lacks the clearness of exposition shown by the latter. It should be noted that the latter has written in Pāli and his work is available. The former had written presumably also in Pāli, but the original work is not available, Besides this obvious disadvantage, the former suffers from rather mixed and confused arrangement of matter he had thought fit to bring in.

The following is the gist of his description:

> He who enters the fourth meditation, jhāna, with facility on the eight kasiṇas and two kasiṇas, is able to cause the arising of the knowledge of the recollection of past lives ... The form plane meditation ... is the fourth meditation, jhāna, of the form plane where there is freedom of the mind ... There are three kinds of recollection of past lives: many lives, birth made, practice made ...

These three kinds are not to the point excepting the last one. Even this kind, that is, practice made, is joined with the four riddhipādas, as given in the paṭisambiddhāmagga (Iddhipādas in Pāli).

Based upon the four riddhipādas, he describes his real method:

> He, having sat down, remembers what he had done in the day or all that he had done bodily and verbally. Thus also as regards the actions of the night. In the same way he recollects all that he had done during a day, during two days and thus backwards to one month. In the same way he remembers all

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that he had done during two months, one year, two years, a hundred years up to his last birth.

He has shown us nothing explanatary to the obvious impossibility of remembering all the events backwards to the present germination of the foetus in the mother's womb.

He regards the beginner or now yogin, he says:

> The new yogin remembers all pertaining to this life. If any yogin is not able to remember his past births, he should not give up exerting himself. He should develop meditation, jhāna, again and again. He, in developing meditation, jhāna, well, should purify the mind with action similar to the correct method of burnishing a mirror. Having purified his mind, he remembers his past exactly. If he continues to remember his past beginning with one life, he is exceedingly glad ...

Evidently the Master's simile has been stretched too much and too far. The simile was used to illustrate the clarity of the remembrance of past lives and events connected with them. The Master has not insisted on the remembrance of this present life as requisite for past ones. Both our savants have directly insisted on this dubious device. This is perhaps due to the absence of any definite device for the organization of this knowledge, so far as the old commentaries they speak of are concerned. Another alternative is their unwillingness to disclose a secret device for a beginner till he has qualified himself and his competence by remembering the well-nigh impossible events of the whole present life-span.

As regards the capacity of different levels of mind in remembering past events or lives, the *Vimutti-magga* lacks coherence compared to the *Visuddhi-magga*. He says:

> Outsiders remember forty aeons. They cannot remember more than that, because of their feebleness. The noble hearers remember ten thousand aeons; more than this, the chief hearers; more than this, the Silent Buddhas; and more than this, the Tathāgatas, the Supremely Enlightened Ones, who are able te recall to mind their own and others' previous lives, activities, spheres, and all elese. The rest remember only their own previous lives and few of the previous lives of others.

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There is no mention of immeasurable aeons so explicitly recorded by Buddhaghosa. This is probably due to the records of different traditions followed by the two savants under discussion.

Master's Device for Organizing this Knowledge

We find the textual version of this knowledge, without the simile of going round three villages, in many suttas (I. 4, 6, 12, 27, 36, 39 ... II. 1, 3. 4, 15, 29, 35, 44, 50, ... III. 1, 8) of *Majjhima Nikāya* alone. These sixteen suttas of a single Nikāya would show how widely the instruction of this knowledge should have been preached as found in the Buddhist scripture. This could not have occurred if the knowledge were simply imaginaive. Unfortunately for us, the biographical portions found in several (I. 4, 12, 36; II. 35, 50 suttas) of the above suttas do not give us the procedure the Bodhisattva followed in organizing this knowledge.

Moreover, the stereotyped method (peyyāla) of recording them has left us nothing of important details for actual practice. The commentary on these suttas is also not helpful in this respect; for it invariably refers to the *Visuddhi-magga* for other particulars. This is disappointing from the practical point of view. For the identical descriptions of these suttas reveal nothing on comparison with one another. The uniformity of peyyala or repetition has ovbiously obliterated the different versions of this knowledge and produced the set form we find in these suttas.

Even the simile in this connection is found in a set form—the simile of going round of three villages. These similes are attached to three suttas (I.2, 10, *Dīgha*; and 11, 27, *Majjhima*), which are otherwise identical with the rest. In spite of these disadvantages, we shall see whether we can trace it to the original way of remembering the past. We have seen already what the savants had to offer us, the seemingly impossible task for exercise. This sort of exercise not found in the Master's precept. Whatever the Master taught was expected to bear fruit during the same rainy resort, that is, within three or four months. There is no reason why one of us could not do so to some extent within six months.

The relative suttas of the *Majjhima* and the commentary on

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the very first sutta of the Mahāvagga definitely say that the Bodhisattva realized the knowledge of his past lives on the first part or watch of the night, after the organization of the four form trances the same evening. There is no mention of any method other than that of directing his attention to the knowing of his past lives. The disposition of his mind at the time appears to be such as to preclude the mental following of all he did backwards to his childhood in Kapilavastu. The allusion to his unspecified method in the relative suttas is clear, as can be legitimately derived from what he says:

"Begun was, however, Brāhmaṇa! my endeavour (viriya) unsluggish; roused (was my) memory unforgotten; becalmed (was my) body untroubled; collected (was my) mind concentrated, Then verily. I, Brāhmaṇa ... dwelt in the first Jhāna ... second Jhāna ... third Jhāna ... fourth Jhāna" These are the regular or gradual stages of the form trance, the main basis of Buddhism. Without this trance nothing of importance could have been discovered by the Shākya prince in spite of his huge background accumulated by him during innumerable life-cycles. The above passage is found in the Bhaya-Bherava (Fear and Terror) sutta (I.4) of the *Majjhima.*

The general introduction to this knowledge is found to be the fourth stage of the form trance in all the suttas concerned. Hence there is no wonder that the later generation took it to be the foundation trance, although the Master has never said so. This will be clearly understood, when we take a similar knowledge of outsiders or non-Buddhist yogins into consideration. The latter could also organize this sort of knowledge quite independently of the said foundation trance, wich is given in the first sutta of *Dīgha* (1.1):

> Here, Monks! some Samaṇa or Brāhmaṇa (believers of eternalism with respect to the soul and the world or region), in consequence of exertion, energy, practice, and non-negligence having depended on right meditation, touches that sort of mental samādhi, in the tranquillized mind of which sort in the purified, cleansed, faultless, bereft of defilement, he (the practising Samaṇa or Brāhmaṇa) remembers the varied former dwelling (pubbe-nivāsa), for instance—even one birth, two

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births, three births, four births, five births; even ten births, twenty births, thirty births, forty births, fifty births; even a hundred births, thousand births, hundred-thousand births; even many hundreds of births, many thousands of births, many hundred-thousands of births: 'There was I (the practiser) with such a name, such a family name, of such an appearances, (subsisting) upon such food, feeling such pleasant comfort and painful discomfort, and upto such length of life.

This description of past lives is more detailed than what we find in that of regular practice of monks.

Continuing the description, the Master says further:

Fallen (having died therefrom, I (the practiser) was born in such place: therein also I was with such a name, such family name, of such an appearance, (subsisting upon) such food, feeling such comfort and discomfort, and upto such a period of life. Fallen therefrom, I am born here. Thus he remembers the varied former life in modes and detail.

A similar and identical passage (peyyāla) however makes us doubt the veracity of all these details.

On this ground of one's own experience, the first type of eternalists asserts the eternal and immutable soul and world, the sutta says. The second type of them has still farther experience of past lives. The sutta says further: "The second Samaṇa-Brāhmaṇas ... remember ... the varied former dwelling, for instance: 'Even one Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭa (devolution and evolution kapppa or aeon), two Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭas ... three Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭas ..., four ... five ..., ten Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭas; ... "The third type of them has still more knowledge of longer aeons:

"The third Samaṇa-Brāhmaṇas ... remember ... the varied former dwelling, for instance: 'Even ten Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭas, twenty ..., thirty ..., forty Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭas' ... Thus they remember the varied former dwelling in modes, detail, and varied form." On such grounds they assert that the soul and the world are eternal and immutable, the sutta states. This is the reason why Buddhaghosa states that the outsiders can remember the past lives only to a maximum of forty devolutions and

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evolutions of kappas or aeons. The confusion of these specific kappas has already been discussed above in the section 'Confusion of Aeons' excepting the reconcilement of 'Samvaṭṭa and Vivaṭṭa kappas.

The reconcilement of these samvaṭṭa and vivaṭṭa kappas is ostensibly easier than the kappa. The Kappa sutta (IV. 16. 6) of the Aṅguttara Nikāya says definitely that these aeonic terms allude to the innumerable numbers of years during the period of the devolved state, the evolution, and the evolved state. Each of these four uncountable periods is called an asaṅkhyeyya. But the Aggañña sutta (III. 4) of the *Dīgha* says that this event is rare and exceptional (kadaci karahici). So one complete cycle of this rare event would evidently entail, from devolution to evolution and the state of staying evolved, four asaṅkhyeyyas comprising, according to Buddhaghosa, one mahākappa.

The combination of samvaṭṭa and Vivaṭṭa, mentioned above, would virtually mean a mahākappa. Hence some of the non-Buddhist yogins are said to have been able to remember the maximum of forty such combinations, that is, mahākappas. The commentary on the 18th sūtra of the third part of the *Yogasūtra* has given us an ancient story of a saint, named Jaigiṣavya, who is said to have remembered the past of ten mahāsargas or mahākalpas or mahākappas in Pāli. The conception of the former and the latter terms, however, is not identical, but both the terms indicate a complete cycle of cosmic aeonic events.

The Master has not, however, enumerated the samvattas, vivaṭṭas, or samvaṭṭa-vivaṭṭas which he had remembered at first under the Bodhi tree. Similarly, he has not done so in his relative precepts, which encourage the disciples or recount what he had taught to them. The phrase he uses in these places is 'anekepi' or 'more than one'. This might imply that the remembering of very long past by itself is not strictly necessary for the purpose of yogic knowledge and insight. Nevertheless, this knowledge is evidently worth achieving.

The difficulty of ascertaining the exact import of kappa in general is often met with in the text. It is said that one hundred-thousand kappas have elapsed from the former

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Buddha Padumuttara to our own Śākyamuni. There is no mention of any Samvaṭṭa kappa in between these kappas. Hence we have to take these periods as ordinary kappas without any Samvaṭṭa. This would mean, that, there has occurred no Samvaṭṭa or devolutionary period during this whole period of one-hundred-thousand kappas. Then the question arises as to what this term means in this context.

The maximum of an ordinary kappa might be considered as the period of the life-span of a Mahābrahmā of the first Brahmaloka. This period has been already estimated in the section 'Confusion of Aeons.' In that case we shall have to discriminate between the Brahmā and Brahmaloka; the death of the Brahmā would not then mean the destruction (Samvaṭṭa) of the cosmic world. In Hindu mythological cosmology or cosmogony, the death of a Brahmā entails the destruction of his creation, that is, the whole world, as well. The minimum of an ordinary kappa would depend on the definition of the ordinary kappa, which is given neither in the text nor the commentary.

The commentary of the Suttanipāta, Paramaṭṭhajotika, on the first stanzas (I. 3. sutta and II. 2. sutta) and on the third stanza (II. 4. sutta) gives us some important information:

> Perfections required of Bodhisattvas vary as regards the innumerable asaṅkhyeyya) periods of time—four (Śākyamuni) eight (Kassapa), sixteen (some others) plus one hundred-thousand kappas. The cause of this variation is the preponderance of intellect, faith, and vigour over the remaining two factors respectively.

(Moreover, the first of these suttas (I.3.) adds that the Buddhas, their principal (agga) disciples, and (by implication) Pacceka-buddhas are born in the developing (vivaṭṭamane) kappa.

It has been already said that the Bodhisattva does not descend during the time of cosmic devolution (in the section, Confusion of Aeons, above). And it is said above that the Buddhas, their principal disciples, and Pacceka-buddhas are born in the

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developing kappa. These two reasons definitely place the eventful career of Buddhas in and during the developing period of a kappa. This conclusion logically considered would make the long duration of one-hundred-thousand kappas extending from the Buddha Padumuttara to our own Śākyamuni the intervening kappas of one and only one developing (vivaṭṭa) kappa. This, however, is subject to reinterpretation.

The definite mention of the number of seven samvaṭṭa-vivaṭṭa kappas is made in the Metta sutta (Itivuttaka I. 22) remembered in some remote past by the Master as given below:

"Verily do I remember, Monks!...having contemplated Metta-citta (the first Brahma-vihāra of friendliness), the fact of my not coming back to this world (Loka) for seven Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭa Kappas..." But the short sutta does not mention the occasion of this remembrance. Buddhaghosa, however, opines (*Visuddhi-maga*, 13th Chapter): "Remembering the past life also, the monk who applies himself to the remembering of kappas remembers, out of these kappas, more than one (aneke) Samvaṭṭa kappas, more than one Samvaṭṭa-Vivaṭṭa kappas also."

The above interpretation of the kappa admits of the immense capacity of remembrance attainable by any one of us, irrespective of his own initial dictum that only the principal disciples can remember the past of one immeasurable (asaṅkheyya or asaṅkhyeyya) kappa only. Moreover, he says that, in one samvaṭṭa kappa, the destruction of the extreme type (the third type) is carried on for sixty-four kappas, which the sub-commentator has probably taken for as many kappas in the developing kappa also.

The re-interpretation we have mentioned above regarding the long period of one-hundred-thousand kappas might be made in the light of the Mahāpadāna sutta (*Digha* II. 1), its commentary, and the two suttas (III. 3 and 4) of the *Dīgha*. The text of the first sutta regarding the last seven Buddhas, from Vipassi to Gotama (Śākyamuni) describes their brief particulars, with a full story of the former Buddha Vipassi. The short description of these seven Buddhas is also found in verses in the *Buddha-vansa*: the same is found in prose narrative in the Nidāna-kathā of the Jātaka commentary.

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The above text treats of ninety-one kappas including the current one but does not mention any samvaṭṭa kappa intervening these kappas. Accordingly these kappas should have come down up till now without any catastrophic cosmic destruction of samvaṭṭa kappa. So textually we may infer the same sort of things from the time of the appearance of Buddha Padumuttara to this day, an immense period of one-hundred-thousand kappas. The commentary on the above sutta has in a way accepted our thesis that this period of one hundred-thousand kappas was not visited by any samvaṭṭa kappa.

Although no samvaṭṭa kappa intervened in this long period of time, but, according to the commentary, each interval between two Buddhas in the same kappa underwent a long epoch of changing conditions of the human life-span. The life-span gradually lessened to the lowest limit of ten years and then rose gradually and reached the upper limit of ostensibly one hundred-thousand years; thereafter, the life-span descended to the normal life-span obtaining in the then human life including that of the Buddha concerned. It is left to us to infer that the rest of these kappas also showed the same changing phases. Hence these one hundred-thousand kappas intervening in this current asaṅkheyya of vivaṭṭa-kappa are ordinary kappas without samvaṭṭa or cosmic devolution. The confusion of aeons will need further study.

Readjustment of Devices for Past Remembrance

We have seen in the previous sections how Master organized the knowledge of his own past lives extending from the immediate past to one-hundred-thousand lives and then to more than one mahākappa (mahākalpa in Sanskrit). Without going any further turn that, he must have come to the legitimate conclusion that it is no use of going farther and farther in the past; for he must have clearly seen that the past was unfathomable (anamatagga), and directed his attention towards another knowledge.

His method was obviously unpremeditated. He organized the first jhāna, already attained by him spontaneously in Kapilavastu many years back ago/earlier. This very form trance was the foundation of his further jhānas. He gardually and quickly

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attained the fourth stage of form trance. Herein he found his memory and neutral poise (upekkhā) purified and tranquillized. Again unpremeditated and spontaneously, he bent and directed his attention to his past, not out of any curiosity or inquisitiveness; for, he had already attained the fully purified state of a neutral or indifferent poise.

The text, in the biographical suttas discussed above, then says:

> "Then in such a well-collected and purified mind...I directed the mind for the remembrance of past dwellings (lives). Then I remembered the varied past dwelling (lives); for instance:—Even one life, even two lives, even three lives, even four lives, even five lives, even ten lives, even twenty lives, even thirty lives, even forty lives, even fifty lives, even hundred lives, even thousand lives, even hundred-thousand lives, even more than one samvaṭṭa-kappas, even more than one vivaṭṭa-kappas, even more than one samvaṭṭa-vivaṭṭa-kappas.

The gradually ascending order of numbers shows their actual order of them, his organizing, experiencing, and transcending the past events.

The Bodhisattava achieved this knowledge during the first watch of the night. If we consider the duration to be four hours, he must have remembered about forty lives each second. Such a feat as this is not be possible without a supernormal mental vision. In the case of a novice or beginner, Buddhaghosa says that it is momentary; a series of such mental moments, each in one javana cycle through the mind-door, can be obtained, as implied in the regular cognitive process and also understood in the relative section of the *Visuddhi-magga*. In the case of the Bodhisattava also, the process would be the same; but his mind would advert so swiftly and the javana cycle producing the moment of the supernormal comprehension would complete the cycle as much quickly that the mental series of knowing the past would seem constant, although this series would be never continuous, as it is in the appanā stage of form or formless trance.

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About the modes and details of this remembrance, the Bodhisattva says:

> Then I remembered the varied dwellings (past lives); for instance—Even one life...kappas—'In such a place was I with such a name, with such a family-name, of such an appearance (subsisting) upon such food, experiencing such comfort and discomfort, and living such a life-span. Fallen down (having died) therefrom, in such a place was I born; therein also was I with such a name, with such a family-name, of such an appearance, (subsisting upon such food, experiencing such comfort and discomfort, and living such a life-span. Fallen down therefrom, here am I born.

The repetition of modes and details in the two successive lives are indicative of actual remembrance and significant for our practice as well.

Herein we have the working plan of three consecutive lives the first is the penultimate life, the second or next is the last life, and the third is the basic life from which the two lives are remembered in succession. This order is presumbly fundamentally different from what our savant, Buddhaghosa, has suggested to us to do. It is probably not to remember each point of the past item doggedly backwards, but to follow the order we actually experience in from the penultimate birth to the last birth and thence to the basic birth. This is ostensibly natural and in conformity with the order of our experience in the immediate past also.

This is fully and favourably illustrated in the simile found in the relative portion of the three suttas, Sāmaññā-phala (I. 2.), Subha (I. 10.) of the *Dīgha*, and Mahā-Sakula-Udayi (II. 27.) of the *Majjhima*. The simile is given after the description of this knowledge as follows:

> As for instance, if a (certain) person should go from his own village to another village; if from that village also he should go to another village; if he should (again) come back to his own village. Supposing he should (then) think (remember) thus: 'Verily I went from my own village to such a village;

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even therein I stood up thus, I sat down thus, I spoke thus, and became (remained) silent thus. From that village also I went to such a village: even therein I stood up thus, I sat down thus, I spoke thus, and became silent thus, I am (again) from that village come back to my own village. Likewise he does...

This simile has been briefly compared to the textual instruction in the commentary of the *Dīgha* on the first sutta thus:

In the simile of the knowledge of the former dwelling (life), the three villages only gone over that day are taken (in order) that the work done that day becomes patent (pākatā). Therein the person who had gone to the three villages should be likened to the possessor of the knowledge of the past life; the three villages are likened to three births; like the clear visualization of the work done that day in the three villages by that person, should be seen the revelation of the work done in the three lives by that monk who having directed the mind for the former dwelling is seated.

This commentary clearly shows that the practice of remembering the three former lives is indicated in the way and order of our past experience. We have to begin it from the farther past life, come then to the preceding one, and thence to the present, and not from the present, then to the preceding, and thence to the farther past life, as Buddhaghosa has suggested.

Nevertheless we cannot by-pass his instruction entirely. We shall have to readjust his suggestion in the light of the textual guidance. It is simply this:

Start from some fixed past event or item of remembrance. Follow up this starting point successively, event by event, or item by item, to the present. Go back quickly to the same starting point from which we began the practice; herefrom take some farther past event or item as the next starting point. And follow up this second or new point successively and similarly, event by event, or item, to the first stoppage or starting point. Go back quickly to the second point again;

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herefrom take up some still farther past event or item as the third starting point. And follow up this third point again successively in a similar way.

This sort of practice on this present life will, however, be merely normal or ordinary, and not supernormal or extraordinary. While continuing the the practice, we shall have to be organising continuing the form trance. Off and on during the and practice, we might be approaching the trance; this would necessarily arouse the supernormal remembrance for a mental moment. During this short moment the object of remembrance will or must be vivified just momentarily or at least clarified to make the practiser feel that he has realized something supernormally about his past. This experience, however little, would give a strong impetus for further practice. This is the re-adjusted method suggested here. In the next section we shall see what the *Yogasūtra* says on the subject.

Yogasutra on This Knowledge

The 18th sūtra of the third part has included this knowledge in its yogic field of development through the means of practice technically known as 'samyama'. This term is a collective name for 'dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi' (III. 1 to 6 sūtras) or in short, the channelizable concentrated samādhi. The samyama of the *Yogasūtra* is in a way like the foundation trance in the Buddhist yoga. There is, however, only a brief explanation in the commentary also. The principle can be to some extent utilized in the re-adjustment of Devices described in the preceding section.

The said sūtra says: "By realizing the impressions the knowledge of the former birth is (obtained)." The commentary explains this laconic sentence as follows:

These impressions are of course two (of two kinds). The form of latent impressions (is one) which are the causes of remembrance and defilement; (the other is) the form of merit and demerit which are the cause of the fruition (vipāka). These are made in the former (or previous) lives; they are unperceived mental properties like change, effort,

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cessation, vigour, vitality, piety. The samyama (channelized samādhi) in them is efficient for the realization of impression (samskāra).

The realization of these impressions is not without the experience of space, time, and body and organs. Thus by the realization of impressions there arises the knowledge of the former life to the yogin. In the case of others also by the realization of the (others') impressions there is (obtained) the perception (samvedanam) of others' life likewise (as one's own).

This device can be even briefly summarized thus:

Compose the mind and direct it to the inner disposition and tendency; this will be a sort of Dhāraṇā to the Sanskāra or impression. Maintain the attention, concentrating it in the object of meditation, that is, indeterminate mental field; this will amount to Dhyāna. Get absorbed into this mental field or into this meditative effort till one forgets oneself; this will be approaching the state of samādhi. These three steps together make up the device of Samyama, described in the *Yogasūtra* (III. 1, 2, 3, 4 sūtras). The initial desire, purpose, intention, or will persisting throughout these steps would set the mind to clarify the indeterminate field.

For the commentary on the 15th sūtra of this third part says : "There are two dharmas (categories of objects of, the mind, citta); one is Paridriṣṭa (directly perceived, felt, or known); the other is Aparidriṣṭa (indirectly or inferentially known)." In the second category of mental objects, there are seven, one of which is the sanskāra or impressions. The existence of this impression is proved by its memory or remembrance, when arisen or aroused. Hence by the device of samyama, the memory of past experience can be revived.

As explained above, the commentary on the afore-mentioned sūtra (III. 18) has said :

"Samyama in these (mental objects indirectly known) is efficient for the realization of Sanskāras (impressions). The

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realization of these (impressions) cannot occur without the experience of space, time, and Nimitta (sign, particulars such as body, organs, parents, etc.). Thus by the realization of Sanskāras the knowledge of (one's own) former lives arises to the yogin. And similarly by the realization of the Sanskāras of others also the knowledge of others' lives is (obtained).

This is easily said, but there are no gradual steps to its attainment given and specified in the *Yogasūtra*, its commentary, and various sub-commentaries. The best we could do is the brief summary given above. At any rate this old source also verifies our thesis on the memory of past lives.

Pakinnaka-katha or Miscellaneous Topic

The Master should have seen some deeper significance in retaining this knowledge of the past lives in his system of meditation and insight. For it can be done away with in the most important four form trances, nine gradual absorptions, or four supramundane stages and states of Liberation. But still many monks and nuns declare in their songs that they have realized three knowledges (vijjās), or six branches of knowledge (abhiññā), which include this knowledge as well. Had it been superfluous, it would not have been so widely popularized or even cherished.

In our modern environments, the information gained through this knowledge might be even too impolite and dangerous to divulge. Even the Master had to keep the adverse fate of the Queen of Kosala, Mallikā Devi, for seven days from disclosing it, as given in the story of Mallikā Devi (Jarāvagga XI.6 Gāthā) of the *Dhammapāda* commentary. Nevertheless even the little information on this unique subject may immensely help us in being serious towards something worth achieving.

It appears, from what we find in the Sāketa Jātaka (No. 68) Commentary, that a long association with some person in the past is sometimes enough to revive the forgotten memory suddenly at seeing him unexpectedly. The Master was then dwelling in the Añjana Forest of Sāketa, with a congregation

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of monks. One day a certain aged Brāhmaṇa, an inhabitant of Sāketa nagara (city), while going out of the city, chanced to see the Master at the inner gate. Falling down at the feet of the Master, he said:

"Tāta! (son!) the parents should be taken care of in their old age by the children, should they not ? Why did you not show up yourself to us ? You are seen by me now. Come along to see the (your) mother." So saying, he took the Master and brought him over to his house. The Master also went there and sat down on the seat allotted to him, together with the members of the Saṅgha. The Brāhmaṇi also, thinking that her son had come over now, came up to him and, falling at the feet of the Master, said: "Tāta! where had you gone so long ? The parents, when aged; should be taken care of, should they not?" So saying, she wept, "Come on and bow down to your (elder) brother so saying, she made the (her) sons and daughters bow down to the Master.

Returned therefrom, the monks were greatly astonished at this strange event. The Master explained to them the reasons thus:

> Monks! This Brāhmaṇa had been continuously in the past for five hundred births, my father, for five hundred births, my father's younger brother, for five hundred births my father's elder brother. This Brāhmaṇī also had been continuously in the past for five hundred births the (my) mother, for five hundred births the younger aunt, for five hundred births the elder aunt. Thus for one and a half thousand births I have been taken care of by the Brāhmaṇa...by the Brāhmaṇī.

This is seemingly an exceptional Jātaka story.

It is strange that both the Brāhmaṇa and his wife recognized the Master as their son at first sight. They might have been mistaken in their fancy, but the Master could not have been deluded in this manner. The members of the Saṅgha were likewise astounded; the Master had to tell them what he knew. If we study this story critically, we find some difficulty about when the event had occurred. The last Jātaka story is that of

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prince Vessantara. After this, the Bodhisattva was born in the Tusita (fourth) Heaven. The life-span in this heaven is 576 million years (vibhaṅga 18. 6. 131). After full heavenly life, the Bodhisattva was born here. Then, if story of Vessantara was the last Jātaka, the aforesaid Sāketa Jātaka must have been previous to that. The gap between the Brāhmaṇa's past related by the Master and the Master himself would be intervened by the enormous life-span in the said heaven. In that case there would be no recency and consequently no possibility of quick recognition on the part of the said parents, as the Jātaka has related. The alternative supposition would carry us too far away from the accepted tradition.

Nevertheless, the remembrance of the past lives appears to be a verity. The devices of remembering this sort of past lives have been described in the previous sections. With the infinity of time there is also the infinity of space or worlds (cakkavāla) in Buddhism. Similarly, we find a sort of the infinite of beings, even though the immutable entity is not accepted in Buddhism. Philosophically considered, Buddhism would present several anomalies. But meditatively, it will appear to be the most consistent; for; it does not stick to anything inner or outer, spiritual or material, mental or physical, as is evident from the first suttas of the first two principal Nikāyas the, *Dīgha* and the *Majjhima*.

This knowledge also concerns itself with regions and worlds other than this world, cosmic devolutions and evolutions beyond imagination, life-spans human and divine so vast as to exceed any expectation, and topics of exegetical interest. But the sum and substance of this knowledge is the method of reviewing our own past and thereby discovering that of others. The key to all these possibilities is the organization of the form trance and thereby the channelling of it to clarifying the indistinct, sub-conscious, or unconscious, or unconscious mental field. Except those of us born here after a long sojourn (five hundred kappas) in the mindless region of Asaññasattas, many of us might not fail to remember something of the past. This something might give us the necessary impetus to arouse a keen interest in it.

Unfortunately I have not met any sādhu willing to tell me

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about any one of his past lives. I have seen a few of the so-called Avatāri Lāmās or Lāmās supposed to have been transmigrating from their old self to the new or successive ones. But to the best of my information, the sign indicated by the dying Lāmā is sought in young lads under five years of age by the old Lāmā's disciples, searched, checked, and selected by them. The little information got from the lad and remembered to some extent by him in childhood is lost or forgotten by him, when he has grown up. Hence it does not come within what we understand as the organized knowledge of past life.

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Nigamana

IN CONCLUDING this phase of the research, I have to say that I have done my best to present herein the relevant matters from the original source, and that from the practical point of view. I have left off some academic and exegetical matters relating to this knowledge. For, the description of those matters might have only discouraged the would-be practisers, instead of encouraging them to put in a greater effort.

The better plan of achieving a sound footing in the yogic sādhanā or practical course would be somewhat like this :

'Get interested anyhow in yoga, yogic practice, benefit of yoga, or autobiography of yogins and achievement of yogins. Let this interest become serious and more serious. When reading books on yoga or yogins if something attracts your attention, think over it again and again. Take everything only tentatively, not for certain; nothing would be certain unless and until it is realized by you yourself; for yoga is after all a personal matter, not an article of faith. Without one's actual realization, the greatest of yogic phenomena would remain nothing more than some feats of illusion, delusion, or magic.

For instance, if the Master had disbelieved the yogic samādhi of his two former teachers at the very outset, he would not have organized it and found the element of dissatisfaction in

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it. On the other hand, if he had believed everything he had heard in the hermitage he attended, he could not have discovered the omniscience and obtained Bodhi. So is the case of Pacceka-Buddhas who strive after individual Bodhi by themselves.

The key to yogic knowledge is and has been the exclusion of other learnings from the mind than rather the quest of self-realizable yoga itself. When one gains a little yogic experience, one will be able to know the genuine instinctively. This is the opportune time for adopting a system for one's own routine practice. The plan of set programme may not be worked up as for other enterpries; for, the yoga is a free unrestricted enterprise entirely meant for one's real spiritual development; any other diversions would mar this value and actually swerve him off this goal and objective.

This phase of this research has been laboriously accomplished; the subject, specially that of the past lives, had greatly taxed my humble capacity and learning; the presentation of such an obscure and controversial subject as this was another task of a difficult nature. How far I have been able to make the subject clear entirely based upon the original source is for the readers, beginners, and savants, to judge. I can say only this much that the initial inspiration of conducting and continuing this project has been the gracious patronage of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal.

As stated in each of the previous five phases, this phase is also complete in itself. The references to the chapters and sections of previous phases are given for detailed study on the relevant topics; without these also the main thesis and its allied topics might be independently studied in this single phase. Adieu !

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Published by the Director : Research Institute, Vārṇaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Varanasi—2. Pāli-Granthamālā-3 :

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from what is said in the said Uddāna. This work in Bengali script and language (except the Gāthās in Pāli) has added a condensed account of the biographical nature of its reciter also. The author of this work says in the introduction that he has collected the matter from the (Pāli) Paramattha Dīpani, the commentory of the Thera-gāthā, and the biography (Jīvana Carit). Besides this work (the songs of the elders), the Thera-Apadāna (the Sacred Life-story of the elders) gives us much information about their former and current life.

My Apology—The listing of bibliographies appended to the phases of this research has been far from what it should have been. Nevertheless it will give the reader an ample opportunity for intensive study and an impetus to trace the source of what I have tapped in this research for anything said, interpreted, or critically examined, if he would have a little patience in tracing it.

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The Buddha's System of Meditation

PHASE VII

SUPERNORMAL KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN DESTINY

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I

Introduction

Devolution and Evolution of Worlds

THE CONCEPTION of worlds in Buddhism is cosmic. The spread of worlds is as extensive as the passage of time. The infinity of time is recognized in relation to innumerable cycles of worlds; but time itself is not accepted in its absolute sense. Similarly, an infinite number of worlds is recognized as spreading extensively; but space itself is not accepted in its absolute sense. Thus the conception of worlds and their innumerable cycles seems to be based on the meditative experience of the limited number of samples of them and not on theory alone.

The 'Anamatagga', or without the concept of the foremost, or in short Beginningless, is this world (samsāra)—this is the recurring theme of the twenty suttas of this Samyutta (No. 16) in the Samyutta or the Third Nikāya of the Pāli Buddhist canon; the context of the sutta shows that the foremost beginning of this samsāra or the cycles of births and deaths of unliberated persons or beings (sattas) is not known, for this world of such cycles is beginningless. This is with respect to the passage of time in the past.

The 'Gaddula-baddha' sutta (22nd Samyutta, 99th sutta) of the same Nikāya with a similar theme says that the cycles of births and deaths of unliberated persons or beings have no end, for this world of such cycles is beginningless. The simile is

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given herein of a dog with a leather strap; if the dog be bound to a firm nail or pillar, the dog runs and turns around the same nail or pillar; in the same manner the unliberated person runs and turns around the material or immaterial object he grasps as his ego.

These suttas were preached by the Master in Sāvatthi and Rājagaha. Thus the world of cycles of births and deaths is conceived as Beginningless for all and endless only for the unliberated beings. With respect to liberated beings, the world of such cycles is beginningless, but comes to an end for them after their death. This conception would make the world without beginning for all and without end for the rest left behind the liberated ones.

There are many suttas describing the remembrance of the previous births of the Bodhisattva, Prince Siddhārtha, by the Master. He remembered many, many numbers of his former lives, even several great aeons (mahākappas) involving four long periods of the cosmic world devolving, remaining in devolution, evolving, and continuing in evolution (samvaṭṭa, samvaṭṭa-ṭṭhāyi, vivaṭṭa, vivaṭṭa-ṭṭhāyi, respectively). Each of these four periods is stated as 'asaṅkheyya' or innumerable by the Master in the Kappa sutta (Aṅguttara IV. 16.6).

Evidently the Master considered the further probing of the past through direct remembrance needless. Hence the past world was thought to be without the first beginning; it is therefore tantamount to a dogma derived from the experience of large samples. With regard to the conception of the world having no end, there was no attempt at probing the long future through direct experience; it was therefore a dogma derived from the cross examination of dhammas.

As a contrast to this dogma, it would be interesting to mention here the theory of Makkhali Gosāla, one of the six religious teachers of the then world, who thought that all the peoples of the world would be liberated after running through the cycles for eighty-four hundred thousand Mahākappins. From his simile of a ball of thread thrown down and running all the while unwinding the thread (to a complete stoppage—commentary), it is plain that he thought that the world would come

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to the final end after the passage of the said number of mahā-kappas. The commentary on this sutta (Dīgha I. 2 Sāmaññaphala) fully and faithfully explains the relevant long passage.

Even the above view of the cosmic world is singularly optimistic; for Makkhali thinks that all the beings will have been liberated at this final end of the world. He does not assign any cause to their bondage and liberation; they are all driven to this end by a fixed destiny (Niyati-saṅgati-bhāva-pariṇatā). This strange view of total determinism entirely negates the theory of kamma and its vipāka (fruit or result). Hence it was hotly denounced by the Master.

The Master has shown in the 'Cakkavatti' sutta (Dīgha III. 3) or the discourse on the universal king that there are causes for the deterioration and amelioration of the inhabitants of the world. These causes are moral degradation and improvement, respectively. The sutta tells us how the defective policy of the state generates and gradually brings about the moral degradation of the people in general. The result, among other evils, is the gradual decrease of their ideal life-span till it reaches the limit of mere ten years.

The climax of moral degradation is reached when the people out of worsening moral chaos kill one another and bring about a week-long general massacre (Sattha-antara-kappa). This is an intermediate or intervening aeon. This is not, however, a record of the past, but a foretelling of future events by the Master.

Some good and wise persons get disgusted with and at the prevailing moral chaos and take to lonely shelters. And thus escaping the general frenzy, these survivors gather together and begin to live morally. Due to this moral living, their society improves on and on till their later generation ultimately attains the ideal longevity.

Such cycles in human society are said to occur, according to the commentary, sixty-four times during the period of one great aeon (mahākappa). Since no aeon is regarded as the earliest, all the aeons intervening or terminating a great kappa might be only earlier or later relatively and never absolutely; there is no kappa that is the very first kappa in an absolutely temporal sense in Buddhism. This intermediate kappa described in the

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above sutta is very probably the coming epoch, in which the future Buddha, Lord Metteyyo, will appear in the world.

Thus there will be altogether five Buddhas in this Bhadda-kappa. How did this Bhadda-kappa, ostensibly the Mahākappa in the state of continuing evolution (vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi), come in? The next sutta 'Aggañña' (*Dīgha* III. 4) gives us some interesting information. The preceding sutta had been preached by the Master to the monks, when he was dwelling in Mātulā in Magadha. The present sutta was preached to a candidate named Vāseṭṭha-Bhāradvājas in Sāvatthi.

The Master begins the discourse with the devolution of the previous world. At the total destruction of the cosmic world below the second Brahmaloka named Ābhassara, most of the beings resort to this subtle region. The Metta sutta (Samyutta VII. 6.9) also repeats this statement. But the question may be asked as to how do most, practically all, the inhabitants of regions lower than the second Brahmaloka, of the peoples of the cosmic world resort to this second Brahmaloka?

The question is taken up by Buddhaghosa (*Visuddhi magga* XIII, Para 33) and his commentator Dhammapāla (Paramattha-mañjūṣā) also in his sub-commentary thereon. This is the most optimistic view to be found in Buddhism. But still it is not without a reasonable cause; for Buddhism cannot tolerate anything happening without cause. The cause in short is their attainment of the requisite form trance in the "Devaloka". The terror of the impending destruction of the world propagated effectively by the heavenly deities named "Loka-byuhā" among the peoples motivates them to practise moral behaviour and devices of trance. Our savant introduces the devolution and evolution of the world to explain what he has enunciated as mentioned above.

Viewed through this perspective of the Theravāda tradition as represented by our savant and his sub-commentator, the renowned Sukhavati in the Mahāyana school, might be profitably compared and contrasted with this mass resort to the Ābhassara Brahmaloka. The former of course is akin to the region of Suddhāvāsa or Abode of Purified Ones not subject to return therefrom, whereas the latter is the brilliant region of shining ones subject to return if they lapse in the Dhamma.

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To resume the said 'Aggañña' sutta, the Master describes the gradual evolvement of the cosmic world. Then the moral necessity of human society brought in the first elected king called 'Mahāsammata' or the acknowledged one by people in general. The Shākyas have claimed their direct descent from this ancient line of sovereigns. It will be interesting to quote King Suddhodana, when he remonstrated with the Master on his begging in the streets of Kapilavastu on the occasion of his first visit after his Enlightenment.

"Why, Bhante! do you shame us? For what purpose do you walk begging alms around? . . . " "This is, Mahārāja! the customary practice of our race." "What, Bhante! ours is the race named 'Mahāsammata-khattiya-vamsa'. Therein not a single khattiya is a practiser of begging alms." "This, however, Mahārāja! is the race of yours named 'Rājavamsa', ours is however the Buddhavamsa . . . " (Pāli Jātaka-nidāna-kathā). The commentary on the Ambaṭṭha sutta (*Dīgha* I. 3) gives us a list of names said to have been those of direct royal descendants of the said sovereign of the people of the first aeon (Paṭhama-kappika).

The commentatorial list might be imperfect and even defective, but what we should mark here is the tradition of an unbroken line of royal persons from the beginning of the first human society. The cycle of devolution and evolution is not, according to Buddhism, automatic and without cause, but is based on the fundamental moral evil and moral good, respectively, as shown above and stated also by Buddhaghosa (*Visuddhi-magga* III. para 64) and Dhammapāla (Paramattha-mañjusā on the same topic).

In spite of the rigid adherence to the principle of morality influencing the cosmic order, the Buddhist ideology is flexible and optimistic. The law of kamma is definitely invulnerable, but not as rigid and inflexible as we might have thought to be. There are several gradations of evil, some effective inhibitions to its full play, and above all the uncertainty of its appearance. Similarly, the operation of good is said and also found to be controlled by several conditions. Thus the law of kamma is intricate but optimistically interpretable.

It is remarkable that Buddhism mostly relies on its own text

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and tradition for the construction of the world according to its moral system. We cannot expect a scientific treatment of natural knowledge on modern lines in Buddhism, but what is given in it can be traced in many cases to the experience of the Master himself. What is based on his experience can be fully relied upon and followed single-mindedly by us, if we are desirous of achieving something of permanent value. Hence the topic we are going to deal with in this phase of research can be only found, learnt, and profitably practised in the Master's system.

Regions or Abodes of Habitation

Buddhism appears to be aware of many, many numbers of worlds (cakkavāḷas). The number of worlds counted in the 'Cūḷanikā' sutta (*Aṅguttara* III, 8.10) corresponds to the stated number in the Aṭṭhasālini (IV. para 10) and in the *Visuddhimagga* (XI. para 102). This number is one thousand billion or one million million (koṭi-sata-sahassa). The conception of a cakkavāḷa appears to be like this one we inhabit, with the earth, the moon, the sun, and the Sineru Mountain.

The dimension of each cakkavāḷa is stated to be both in length and breath 1203450 or 1.2 million 3½ thousand yojanas (practically in diametre), the circumference (parikhepa) is stated to be 3610350 or 3.61 million yojanas (thrice the diametre). The height of a cakkavāḷa is not expressly stated in both the said works (Aṭṭha. IV. 4; Visuddhi. VII, paras 40 and 41). Dhammapāla commenting on the word 'Saṇṭhiti' has however implied that the dimension would be the same for length, breadth, and height. And he also says that the word 'cakāvāḷa' means Loka-dhātu and it is like a globe.

The length of a yojana varies in Pāli and Sanskrit works; it has a range in round numbers from four and a half to twelve and a half miles, or from seven and one-fourth to twenty and one-third kilometres. We do not know what was the measure of a yojana in those early times. There are of course several distances mentioned between Kapilavastu, Sāvatthi, Rājagaha, and Takkasilā, and some other places in a few commentaries. But the distance between two places might have been the measure of the road between them, and not the straight linear

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measure. Hence the present distance taken from a map would be obviously less than the former.

The distance between Kapilavastu and Sāvatthi was fifteen yojanas (Majjhima II. 24 commentary). The distance on a map between them is about 78 miles or 125 kilometres; the old road then might have been a little longer; the measure of a yojana would therefore be equal to about five and a half miles or eight and a half kilometres. The late savant, Rāhula Sāṅkrityāyana, calculating the shortest distance between Sāvatthi and Sāketa as six yojanas (*Mahāvagga* 7.1 para 1), makes a yojana equivalent to about eight miles (*Purātattva-Nibandhāvali* in Hindi, para 2).

The site of Sāketa has been taken for that of present Ayodhya on the right bank of the Sarayu river; but the old sight might not have been on this place. Other distances from Sāvatthi give us different results, viz., Rājagaha (45 yojanas) about six miles, Sankissa (30 yojanas) 5.6 miles, Takkasila (192 yojanas) 3.8 miles per yojana. Moreover, the usual distance of yearly travelling rounds covered by the Master, when taken into consideration, would lower the coverage of miles per yojana.

Barring the period of the rainy season, the Master together with the monks travelled on the sacred mission of propagating the Dhamma for the rest of the year. There are three such rounds, the great circle (Mahā-maṇḍala) covering nine hundred yojanas in nine months, the middle circle (Majjhima-maṇḍala) covering six hundred yojanas in eight months, and the last circle (Antima-maṇḍala) covering three hundred yojanas in seven (or less than seven) months. All these three rounds entail everything demanded by the people from the travelling missionaries, headed by the Master.

It is the Master who is found to be preaching to the people. All the monks including the Master travel on foot; in the meantime they have to go on the begging round in the village or township near their camp or monastery. In the first category of round, the average rate of travel comes to one hundred yojanas a month or ten yojanas in three days. On the second, one hundred yojanas in forty days or ten yojanas in four days. Even on the last, one hundred yojanas will have to be covered

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at most in seventy days (Samanta-pāsādikā, commentary on the Vinaya Piṭaka, Āciṇṇa-kathā of Verañja-kaṇḍa).

The last category of three hundred yojanas may be completed, if necessity arises, in seven, six, five, or four months; thus says the commentary on the above-mentioned sutta (*Majjhima* II. 24). In this last round also one hundred yojanas may take 70 to 40 days. So ten yojanas will have to be travelled generally in three or four days and rarely in five to seven days. Obviously the then measure of a yojana appears to lie between 4 and 6 miles or 6.4 to 9.6 kilometres and not more than these.

To resume the topic of the dimension of a cakkavāḷa, it is a pity that the knowledge of astronomy evinced in the text and the commentary is primitive. Even the information about the mountains and the seas in them is full of exaggeration. This was primarily due to the neglect of study and experiment of mundane or natural matters regarding these things. The neglect must have stemmed from the denouncement by the Master of the knowledge prevalent then, as enumerated in the Mahāsīla (great virtue) section of the first sutta of the *Dīgha*.

The Master cannot be imagined to have made such misstatements about the natural objects in the relative text. But the commentators or their tradition took everything about these things for external objects. That was the reason why I have touched on the inner phenomena observable within the central canal (suṣumnā) time and again in this research. But without the supporting text and commentary, I could not present the matter fully.

What the commentary of the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, the Aṭṭhasālini, and the *Visuddhi-magga* have said about the 'Okāsa-loka' of the spatial or external region, as given above, should be understood as mystic globe, the diameter of which is 1.2 million yojanas and a few thousands more. The circumference is given roughly three times this number, that is 3.6 million yojanas and ten thousand and a few hundred as the circumference of this globe.

Within this globe there is the earth in a spherical shape measuring 240 thousand yojanas in diameter. Covering this terrestrial globe on all sides, there is the watery globe established in the air, which measures double of this, that is, 480

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thousand yojanas in diameter. Covering this watery globe, there is the globe of air measuring double of this, that is, 960 thousand yojanas in diameter. The diameter of the latter two globes might even mean the thickness, so that their diameter might be cumulative and measure 720 and 1680 thousand yojanas, respectively. Since the last figure would exceed the original diameter of the cakkavāḷa, our former figures would be more consistent.

Outside the third or last globle of air, there would be still left a globe of space measuring a few thousand (3450) more than 340 thousand yojanas. This is the cakkavāḷa. Now within it, there are eight mystifying mountains. The first and central is the Sineru (Sumeru in Sanskrit), 84 thousand high above and as many below the surface of the encircling ocean in yojanas. The sub-commentary rightly quotes a text from the Aṅguttara (Satta-suriya sutta VII, 7.2) and says that its length and breadth are each of the same dimension.

There are seven more mountains round this Sineru, each of which is half the dimension of the preceding one. They are Yugandhara, Īsadhara, Karavika, Sudassana, Nemindhara, Vinataka, and Assakaṇṇa. Because they go round the Sineru, their breadth would ostensibly measure one-fourth instead of half, as said above. So Yugandhara would be half the height of Sineru, but its breadth would be only one-fourth of Sineru; for the sum of the opposite breadth in a ring will have to be taken into consideration.

The sub-commentator adds that there are also encircling areas named Sidantara between any two of these mountains; these seas measure in breadth as much as the breadth of the mountain they separate from the bigger one. Such a description as given above, if at all given by the Master, must have alluded to some inner experience we have mentioned in the course of our discussion. Otherwise, the Master can be scarcely imagined to have been interested in preaching these obvious exaggerations, provided these are conducive to generate something of spiritual value in the listeners, as we find in the Pahārāda sutta in the Aṅguttara (VIII, 2.9).

The description of mountains is continued in the said works still further. The Himālaya mountain has a dimension of five

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hundred yojanas in height, three thousand yojanas in width and length. Obviously this is sheer nonsense, if taken in a literal sense. No inhabitants of Kapilavastu could have ever thought so, at least as regards the height. The exaggeration of the Himālayas shows that the commentator had never gone near this gigantic mountain.

The same sort of exaggerated statements are found in the commentary of the *Yogasūtra* (III. 26). The sub-commentators have not tried to lessen them. It is strange that these erudite savants and scholars should not have tried to check them even with a rough calculation of the mountains and the seas named therein. This is probably because the original text in their eyes carries more weight than their own commonsense.

Dhammapāla is very near the correct distance of the moon in his sub-commentary, when he says that the moon moves above the height of the Yugandhara, which is 42 thousand yojanas high; this figure would give us, at 5.5 miles a yojana, 231 thousand miles for the height of the Yugandhara; the moon therefore may be expected to move several thusand miles above this height. It is strange that the said works state the 'Canda-maṇḍala' or the disk of the moon to be forty-nine yojanas (or about 270 miles) apparently in diameter, when the distance of the moon is said to be 42 thousand yojanas and above. This is an apparent mathematical blunder.

The climax of strangeness is reached when the disk of the sun, Sūriya-maṇḍala, is stated to be fifty yojanas apparently in diameter. It is a pity that the astronomical information in our Pāli text and commentary is apparently primitive. But this shortcoming of their's in natural science has not dwarfed in the least the high content of their spiritual knowledge and moral integrity. The Master must have been aware of this sort of shortcoming in the canon; but he had to concentrate his attention on the quick attainment by his disciples of the unique dhammas he claimed to have discovered by himself; so he did not like his disciples to divert their efforts to the mundane knowledge at the cost of the supernormal and supramundane.

It might be interesting to guess how the Pāli commentary made such a gross mistake in the diameter of the sun and the

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moon. The relative proportion of the two disks as seen from the earth is 50 : 49. These are mere proportionate numbers and cannot be yojanas. Strangely enough, yojanas were added to these two numbers and ascribed to the two disks thus:

"Therein Canda-maṇḍala (Moon-circle) is forty-nine yojanas: Sūriya-maṇḍala (Sun-circle) is fifty yojanas," (*Visuddhi-magga* VII, para 44). Dhammapāla explaining this says: "Therein the Moon-circle is below; the Sun-circle is above; . . . . these are (thus) separated by a yojana." Evidently a long and measurable base line of reference, say, from Sāvatthi to Takkasila, to Campā, or to Ujjain, was not adopted to ascertain the diameter of the moon by a simple trigonometrical calculation; for example, the ratio of the two angles subtended by the moon's disk and the base line of reference, multiplied by the magnitude of the latter, would have given the magnitude of the former.

But the calculation of the diameter of the sun's disk would require at first a difficult estimation of its distance from the earth with a base line of reference stretching even to a near planet or planetoid. This could not have been possible then, not to speak of the estimation of the distances of the stars. This shortcoming of the religions of the world should be ungrudgingly accepted by us. For this very reason, the misconception of the text and the commentary about the lunar and solar diameters was brought in so reluctantly in this research before the readers.

Similarly, the statements of time in years for an aeon or kappa might have been erroneous or exaggerated; so might have been the ideal longevity of the mythically earlier inhabitants of this world, other worlds, regions, and mystic abodes. We have no means to verify what has been said about them in the text, nor do the commentary and other literature provide any verification thereof acceptable to us. Some of these regions seem to be physical or material, some heavier and some lighter than our own region of four elements and their derivatives. These are hell and heaven.

Some regions are decidedly akin to the subtle stuff obtaining in the form trance. Some abodes are even devoid of form and are said to be composed of immaterial stuff as mind and mental concomitants. There is a unique region or abode whrein the

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inhabitants are said to possess bodies but totally bereft of consciousness. These are all attainable only through trance and absorption. Those persons who are liberated after the extinction of their gross and subtle cravings are claimed to be untraceable, after their physical decease, in any identity of matter and mind whatsoever.

The unliberated ones human or divine are, after their physical or psychic death, born in one of these habitations according to their deserts subject to certain conditions. The ideal of complete liberation is present in early Buddhism. We cannot interpret it differently from what this term implies. Later Buddhism has bifurcated it into two categories, viz., the ideal of liberation as soon as possible on the one hand, and as delayed as necessary, on the other.

The first is maintained in the Thera-vāda, while the second is advocated in the Mahāyāna. If the Buddha himself be the measure of Buddhism, he would not have been directly preaching a delayed liberation to his disciples. Moreover, a listener cannot be expected to delay his grasping the knowledge of liberation, when the occasion should arise during the Master's discourse. Supposing any listener was wishing to become a Buddha or a candidate for Buddhahood in future, the Master would have made a fitting remark then and there. No such remarks are recorded in the *Tipiṭaka.*

Rebirth or Life after Death

Buddhism upholds the Middle Path in its efforts towards Nibbāna. It is to avoid the extremes of purposeless severe penance and equally meaningless indulgence in sensual pleasures. In its avowed doctrine, it negates an eternal immutable soul and denounces the theory of only one present life. The latter theory is especially viewed with alarm in Buddhism, inasmuch as this theory would automatically negate everything Buddhism stands for. When there is no life after death, the moral values of good and evil would mean nothing; there would be no prospect of the attainment of Nibbāna and the fruit of the eight-fold path.

The materialistic view of life, or the concept of no rebirth

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after death, is consequently strongly and firmly refuted in Buddhism, as in other Oriental religions and philosophies. The argument for and against this view would be uninteresting to most of the readers and decidedly to the yogins. The knowledge of the past lives treated of in the preceding sixth phase of this research would have amply shown that there were most probably past lives and should similarly be ones till our liberation.

The reality of past lives is to be found in their remembrance, and that of future ones might be proved by the sign. Such a sign may be appearing at the last moment of one's own life-span; or it may be seen by the organization of the relative knowledge to be treated of in this phase of the research.

The verification of rebirth or future life has been tried in a way to prove in the Pāyāsi-rājañña sutta (*Dīgha* II. 10). In this sutta the elder Kumāra-kassapa convinces Pāyāsi Rājañña of the harmfulness of his materialistic view. The view was like this: "There is no other world (Paraloka); there are no beings born after death (Opātikā Sattā); there is no fruit or vipāka of good and evil actions (Kammas)." This was in Setabyā, the town of the Kosala country.

This distorted view of Pāyāsi, he said, was founded on the absence of the positive statement from his dead friends, relatives, and others. He knew some of them to be good and some to be bad; when they were on their death-bed he requested them to come to him and tell him their experience of the other world. He said that they never returned to him and told them what they saw and experienced in the other world. He also gave examples of his experiments for the discernment of the outgoing something as life principle, if it really existed in the human boby; he did not see anything going out. Hence he thought that there was no life after death and consequently no fruit either of good or bad actions.

The elder's explanation and argument are equally in accord with commonsense excepting those on the outgoing something as life principle (jīva). Herein the elder brilliantly explains how life is confined in the functions of the body and how nothing goes out of it. It is practically extinguished with the stoppage of bodily functions. Whatever goes out is the imperceptible 're-birth consciousness'. according to Buddhist

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psychology. This doctrine was not of course explained to him. But the numerous similes are really brilliant.

The above sutta is one of the brilliant dialogues on the common sense view of serious subjects. We cannot expect our deceased friends and relatives to come to us visibly and inform us of what they saw and experienced in something beyond death excepting through a spiritualistic seance. We have however yogic means to verify the life after death, not only that of our individual cases, but also that of other persons whom we know, or we are acquainted with, or we might wish to discern.

Kamma and its Fruit or Vipaka

Whatever we do actively and consciously is said to be an effective action that will positively bear its appropriate fruit in the present life or future lives. The fruit of the past action is spread over the present experience of one's own life. The terror of this law is its invariable and unavoidable occurrence, appearance, or happening at its opportune time and occasion. We cannot ordinarily escape from its clutches, however pious we might have become later. None can forgive us for our past evil deeds. This sort of picture is really very formidable.

This inevitability of the fruit of an effective kamma done in the past and even in the present appears to be the basis, upon which the destiny of persons according to their deserts (Yathā-kamma-upaga) is said to be foreseen and foretold. We might complain that we do not remember and have forgotten the past; we do not know when and how our deserts will unfold. But Buddhistic yoga assures us that the destiny of ours and others can be known through the organization and stabilization of a specific knowledge termed 'Yathā-kamma-upaga ñāṇa' coupled with the divine eye.

Can such a knowledge as the above be worthwhile, or serve any useful purpose for us, or for our society in the modern world ? Such a question as this was asked by a practical king of Magadha to the Master *in* the Mango-grove of the royal physician, Jivaka, in Rājagaha some years before the Master's Passing away into Nibbāna. The question was however general, but the Master gave the answer in interesting details and particulars.

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This answer was on the perceptible fruit of the renunciated life of a monk in the Master's Order, given in the discourse known as the 'Sāmañña-phala' sutta (*Dīgha* I.2). Therein this knowledge is joined with the 'Cutūpapāta-ñāṇa' or the knowledge of Death and Re-birth through the divine-eye. The simile given here to illustrate the import of this knowledge is clear and remarkable. By the way, this illustration would show wonderful utility of discerning where some persons are definitely tending to, even if we are unconcerned about hell and heaven.

Moreover, this knowledge is the consolidation of the previous three branches of supernormal knowledge, viz., mind-to-mind, one's own former lives, and divine eye. This will thus develop the said branches of knowledge further and prepare a vivid ground, upon which the Causal Chain or Dependent Origination might be conducted to its fruitful culmination.

Earth, Hell and Heaven

We have been bound to the earth in mind and body, thought and action, purpose and interest, so that we might be born again and again on this very earth. Our birth may not be always in the human form with health and wealth. It might show a round of successive births in conditions growing from bad to worse. We might ignore the possibility of rebirth and future life of ourselves and others, but we cannot shut our eyes to what our great men have said about hell and heaven.

Even if the idea of hell and heaven is nothing more than the imaginative hallucination of those great minds, we cannot guarantee that we shall not fall victim to the nightmare of hell after death and remain therein for many, many an unforgettable year. Sorrow and suffering are unforgettable wherever we may experience them; it does not matter whether or not they are real, unreal, or substantially false; it is therefore enunciated as the first truth in Buddhism.

If not more, the organization and practice of this knowledge may open our eyes to a new vista of future possibilities not to be gained otherwise. We have anyhow to depend on the Great Minds for things not known to us; most of our accumulated knowledge is second-hand, inferential, and borrowed on trust. If we are intent on gaining direct information, we shall have to

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do something conducive to that sort of knowledge. This knowledge of Destiny promises to be or become highly significant in the field we are presently investigating. The commentary and the *Visuddhi-magga* also imply that the yogin should depend upon the function of the divine eye for this knowledge as well; for there is no specific device other than supernormal sight or the divine eye.

The earth itself is said to be sheltering many kinds of beings other than what we are generally aware of and concerned with. There are many instances of the presence of these non-human beings mentioned in the text and commentary. These are not seen or heard of now-a-days; the causes of their being so might have been diverse, or, as an alternative, the whole story of their existence might have been a figment of our imagination which is however improbable.

We may forgo the hallucination of heaven, if we are so minded; but we cannot trifle with that of hell; for once we fall victim to it, it will be very difficult to extricate ourselves from it, no matter whether it be mere fanciful thinking. Real or unreal, the place of torments is best to be warned about here and now, and kept quite far off. It is the elder Mahā-Moggallāna who speaks of his bitter and long experience of the torments in hell (*Majjhima* I. 50), whether we believe it or not.

It is also the same elder who is said to have often visited hell and heaven and seen many strange beings in the mystic space above the vicinity of Rājagaha. Years before he had also foretold his own destiny, which occurred as he had foreseen. The end of his earthly last life was lamentably very bitter, but he accepted his inevitable destiny with equanimity creditable even to an arhat.

Heaven is a general term for regions higher than the earth. In Buddhism there are three broad categories of heaven. The first is the 'Kāma-sugati' heaven, consisting of six heavenly layers; the first layer is the 'Mahārājika' or the Ruler; the second layer is the 'Tāva-timsa' or Thirty-three, which is generally met with and ruled over by the King of Devas, known as Sakka. The fourth is the 'Tusita', wherein our Bodhisattva was born and dwelt till he came down in the womb of Māyādevi. The fifth is the 'Nimmānarati' or the Builder. The sixth is said to be the

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region wherein our mysterious Māra reigns, as the 'Vasavatti' or one who overpowers.

This zone of six heavens appears to be constituted of subtle material stuff; for the inhabitants of this place are said to enjoy life as we do, even sexual indulgence. But when they die, their body disappears therefrom; they are born either in some upper layer or in our world; if they like, they can visit our world and can interfere in whatever they feel concerned about.

We cannot locate any one of these regions in our material world. The universal kings (cakkatins) are said to have visited at least the second heaven and ruled there together with the king of the Devas. Several monks are also said to have visited all these heavenly regions as visitors without interfering in their works. They have to wage war sometimes with the asuras, the former Devas (Pubbe-devas), who keep on trying to regain their lost domain.

Any one doing some merited works, if purposive, may be born in any of these heavens. Newcomers who are naturally born here are welcomed and not opposed. The Devas desire their colleagues to increase and prosper. Since the Buddhas become the main agency of increasing their number through making them do many direct and indirect moral and pious works, the Sakkas together with his host of followers is always found to be friends with the Buddhas.

The Buddha has maintained the view throughout that there are Devas and their regions and the way to be born among them. But the objective verification of this sort of assertion is found only internally. The explanation could be had in the mystic region described to be observable within the different plexuses in the central canal of the body; but the Buddhistic description does not allow us to do so. We have either to accept it as such, or to reject it as a mere myth; this latter alternative, if adopted, would however negate most Buddhistic literature.

The second category of Heaven is that of Brahmaloka consisting of the four form regions and the four formless ones. The form group of regions is again divided each into three subgroups. The first Brahmaloka has three layers, Lower, Higher, and Highest, so to say; the second and the third have similar layers; the fourth has seven excellent layers, one of these is

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called 'Vehap-phala'; another 'Asañña-satta'; and finally there are five layers of 'Suddha-avasa' or Pure-abode. Thus there are sixteen regions of the Form stuff. These regions are attainable only through the appropriate form trance, immeasurable contemplations (Brahma-vihāra), or meditative insight.

The 'Asañña-satta' is unlike all the conscious trances; it is attainable through a deep trance discarding consciousness altogether. The Master does not advocate this unconscious type of trance. The five Pure-abodes are wherein only the 'Anāgāmins' or attainers of the third stage of supramundane insight reside awaiting their final Nibbāna herein.

The four formless Brahmalokas are attainable through deep absorptions. It is to be noticed that Nibbāna is not counted amongst these sixteen, nor these four. It has no abode; it is untraceable in the known universe of matter and mind.

Basis of Discernment of Beings Dying and Being Born

The Second Knowledge (dutiyā vijjā) gained by the Bodhisatto during the second watch of the momentous night under the Bodhi tree was the knowledge of beings dying and being born (Sattanam Cutūpapāta-ñāṇam, *Majjhima* I. 36). These natural phenomena were discerned by him through the Divine eye (dibbacakkhu). We might wonder at least at the first part of this knowledge; for we have also seen many persons dying. What sort of supernormality lies therein that he should proclaim it thus:

"This was verily, Aggivessana! the Second Knowledge gained by me on the middle watch of the night; ignorance was dispelled; knowledge appeared; darkness disappeared; light appeared" (ibid.). It is plain that he saw persons dying and being born clearly in an extraordinary manner. This must have been in a state of form trance, as he also says so:

"In such a becalmed mind (of the fourth trance)...I directed the mind towards the knowledge of the beings dying and being born; so through divine-eye pure and ultra-human (atikkanta-mānusakena) I saw the beings dying and being born..." In such a form trance as the above, wherein mental speech and thinking are totally stopped, nothing but real things must have been seen. These phenomena should have appeared as something

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extraordinary. On such a meditative basis the Master has asserted that the human beings, if not liberated, are re-born after death.

We cannot imagine that the Master had an imaginative view and that his statement is wrong. On the contrary, our notions about these things are formed casually without logical thinking. Our usual remark, if such as this, would be illogical that we have not seen or found these things in our real life and world and therefore we do not believe in them; this sort of talk is invalid and subject to correction or at least to thoughtful revision. The Master's method of organizing this knowledge may give us a right lead in this field.

We see people die and new babies born; this is going on all over the world; we fail to see the link between these two universal events; the Master says that there is an inevitable connection; we want some visible or ascertainable evidence or proof. This is not available. If it is to be had, it might be in an appropriate trance of our own or of others. The probable evidence of others would be again subject to doubt more than the doubt conceived in the Master's definite words.

There are grave arguments for and light ones against this doctrine. Both of them however lack direct evidence and proof we seek in this subject. We are so heavily engaged in our diverse duties and recreations that we find no time for the investigation in such other-worldly matters. If we have any rebirth in future, we shall have to be careful to better our future destiny. If we have no such rebirth in time to come, we shall have to be still more careful not to get ourselves scattered like chaff. Meditation might give us a new unified and even egoless identity of our own, even if we had none before.

Such unified identity, formed and established internally, might be a great asset for us till we attain liberation. For we have no other recourse than this. Even if we are able to come back here after death, we shall have appeared as ghosts only to be exorcised and driven off as something undesirable; should we be able to come back to our old home years after, supposing, as an incarnated youth, we shall be laughed at and denied any claim to our former wealth and prestige; we shall have to begin, in the last resort, our new life over again.

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Consequently the prospect for our present and future life in the Master's system of meditation is worth serious thinking. The basis of discerning these universal but currently controversial phenomena is the specific cultivation of mind. The foundation trance (pādaka-jhāna) is probably meant by an initial phrase 'evam samāhite citte', or in such a becalmed and collected mind, invariably spoken of by the Master in introducing each and every item of supernormal power and knowledge.

We have, however, some reason to believe that the foundation trance is not always meant by the said phrase; for we find it even in introducing the third knowledge of destroying the defilements (āsavānam khaya) to the discernment of four noble truths leading to the knowledge of liberation. This process is partly deliberative and therefore cannot be wholly conducted in deeper states of samādhi. There is also a provision of attaining this knowledge without a deep trance known as the state of a Dry Deliberator (sukkha-vipassaka).

At any rate the form trance is evidently fit to be a foundation trance, upon which each and every item of iddhi and abhiññā is organizable and operable, as rightly advocated by our erudite savant, the elder Buddhaghosa. Nevertheless we should bear it in mind that the Master has not stipulated the so-called foundation trance (pādaka-jhāna) of the *Visuddhimagga*. Hence we have emphasized the Master's own method throughout this pioneer work, *The Buddha's System of Meditation*; at the same time we have done full justice to important matters available in the works of Buddhaghosa, Upatissa, Vyāsa, and others; a yogin should utilize whatever and wherever he finds help and auxiliary devices, provided that the latter is not opposed to our main objective, which is the adoption of the Master's system for our own practice.

For the Master's system will lead us ultimately to Nibbāna, the unique state of Liberation, which is never to be found in any system in the world, human or divine. No systems in the world except that of the Master can teach us from the very beginning the initial lead to this main objective. The latter may even grossly err in natural sciences known to us now, but it cannot err in its main objective and the right way leading to it. We do not indeed know whereto our belief and even proficiency in

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these modern sciences and technology may lead and will land us in the end—in hell or heaven.

The basis of organizing the supernormal knowledge we are dealing with in this research is in conformity with the main objective; it is not an isolated facet of Buddhism or its yogic culture. To all appearances, no future development of modern science and technology can be imagined to be competent enough to contradict or nullify the objective the Buddha had set for himself and for us too. For the doctrine, philosophy, or religion treating of Nibbāna is and will be valid for all the aeonic times to come. The Buddha however has never said that his Nibbāna is equivalent to the total extinction of himself, whatever he is or he might have been. His remark on this topic was always discriminatory, guarded, and cryptically significant.

Like Destination through Like Kamma

The knowledge of the beings dying and being born enables a yogin to know persons approaching their death and thereafter germinating in the immediate means for rebirth or reappearance in some region. The yogin does not know or mark the cause of such germination or reappearance as the cases under his observation might be. This is not therefore enough. He should also try to find out why a person is born in a particular station. This would be obviously more difficult than the mere observation of death and rebirth or reappearance.

But this step would need an acumen of quick discernment in the correct law of cause and effect. We cannot imagine how a yogin could have done so correctly. The law of kamma and that of assigning cause and effect to it are tricky. We may doubt if monks ever did it satisfactorily, excepting the Master himself. For we find the elder Anuruddha, one of the eighty Mahāsāvakas, who is said to have excelled others in the divine sight, unable to assign causes to women being born, after their death, some of them in hell (5. Kodhana sutta) and some in heaven (15. Akkodhana sutta) of the Samyutta (37).

But we can scarcely undervalue the power of meditative concentration. Some extraordinary vision might have been seen; a further purposive concentration might have revealed the immediate past of the departed persons to these meditators;

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the past would be then the probable cause of their current station and condition; but it may or may not be the sole cause. The Master only could determine the definite cause or causes.

Possibility of Knowing Future Events

There are several incomprehensible topics in Buddhism. Prophecy, prediction, or foretelling of future events is one of them. It is apparently not in strict conformity with the unpredictable occurrence or appearance of the fruit of individual's past kammas. The Master was also definitely against the theory of determinism held by Makkhali Gosāla, one of the six religious teachers of those early times.

In spite of the huge accumulation of the fruits of kammas or actions done in the past, an individual person keeps on doing morally good, bad, or neutral actions throughout his or her life ostensibly with his or her free will. The massive past is said to be passive (abyākata); it cannot initiate by itself an action morally good or bad; it cannot create a single fruit good or bad out of itself. Were there no cognitive process in operation, the person should have passed his whole life-span in continuous flow of bhavaṅga like a life-long lapse in dreamless sleep.

Under these circumstances, the actions done in the present will go on adding new fruits to the already heaped past; this process would automatically create an everchanging destiny. Now an event would mean, with reference to human society, a collective occurrence of destinies. So, logically speaking, a future event, whether involving persons individually or doing so collectively, cannot be so fixed as to allow its foretelling long before.

The above supposition is, however, evinced in several discourses of the Master regarding one's attainment of arhatship. The prophecy of the Master about Ānanda on his death-bed is clearly indicative of this supposition. The prophecy appears to be conditional: "You have done pious work, Ānanda! apply vigour; soon you will become free of āsavas (defilements to Liberation)." He soon became an arhat afterwards, but not without his own strenuous efforts.

There are indeed several instances of individual cases of prophecy. Comparatively longer is the instance of the elder

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Nāgasena and King Milinda, both of whom are said to have been foretold to be born five hundred years after the passing away of the Master (Milinda-Pāñha I. Para 8). The incomprehensible prophecies are those of the former Buddhas regarding our Bodhisatt va and his principal disciples, male and female, members of the Order of clergy and lay persons. Herein the immense time factor is what is incomprehensible.

The prophecy of our Buddha regarding the future deterioration of human society (*Dīgha* III. 3) and the later amelioration thereof may be taken as general. But his prophecy of the future universal sovereign, Saṅkha, and the future Buddha, Metteyya, appearing in this very bhadda-kappa (excellent aeon) is really incomprehensible. There is another anomaly; the schismatic Devadatta should appear as a Pacceka-buddha before the appearance of Lord Metteyya, according to the general law of the appearance of the Pacceka-buddhas. But Devadatta is said to have to dwell in hell for the entire period of the rest of this bhadda-kappa. How is it then possible for him to appear before the completion of this particular kappa?

Nevertheless the knowledge of the near future is worth organizing. Even a glimpse of the future may be of great value for us. The yogic means is ostensibly the best. If the device to know the future is organized and practised, we may know whatever is possible to know beforehand. But such a future glimpse will have to be checked and adjusted till the event occurs. Even the great Moggallāna once made a mistake in an actual scene of warfare (Pārājika IV. Para 208/58) by not following it up through the divine eye. Therein King Bimbisāra had been defeated by the Vajjis or Licchavis at first; this was seen and told; but subsequently he became victorious and this was not followed up by the Elder.

At any rate the foretelling of future events appears to be tricky; but it would be interesting to have even a glimpse of them beforehand. The prophecy about the naked ascetic Korakkhattiya was of course about a proximate future of a week and it came to pass as foretold by the Master (*Dīgha* III. 1. Pāthika-sutta). The Master had foretold that the ascetic would die of alasaka (a certain disease) on the seventh day; that

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after death his body would be left on the Bīraṇa Pillar cremation-ground; and that he would be born among the worst asuras named Kālakañcikā. This prophecy was fully verified too.

The second instance of another ascetic named Kaḷāramaṭṭāka (ibid.) also happened exactly as prophesied by the Master in Vesāli; but the time factor is not stated therein. It is well known that he (the Buddha) foretold his own decease three months before. Even Sāriputta, who is not keen about these powers, foresaw his decease seven days before. Besides the immediate disciples of the Master, several monks in later times also are recorded in the commentary to have foretold their physical end even to an exact moment. Hence the knowledge of the near future seems to be really predictable and practical.

Key to the Three Facets of Supernormal Knowledge

The Master's system of meditation is, to all appearances, a pure and applied science of the mind. There are none of the means and contrivances, such as mantra, yantra, tantra, herbs, vijjā, astrology, etc., utilized in this system. It is entirely dependent on and operated upon through the mind alone. The obvious advantage of this system over all others is the uniform method, moral value, harmlessness, and consistency with the higher spiritual objective.

The key to these three facets of supernormal knowledge is, according to the *Visuddhimagga*, the organization and development of the divine eye (dibbacakkhu). This is also the main instrument for the mind-to-mind knowledge; in a way this must also be needed for the vivid remembrance of one's past lives; in the diverse items of iddhi-vidha also, this supernormal sight would be required. Now this sort of sight must appear to be organizable and practical from the unmistakable experience of the elder Anuruddha (*Majjhima* III. 27 Anuruddha-sutta). This is one of the authenticated suttas wherein we find his declaration of his former dwelling in the radiant region for many lives.

Now we have an authentic information direct from the text (*Dīgha* I. 6. Mahāli-sutta) as to how Sunakkhatta Licchaviputta was successful, within three years of his ordination in the Master's Order, in obtaining the divine eye. He had not

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obviously acquired any proficiency in the gradual trances; had he done so, he would not have left the Order, as we learn from two of the suttas about his desertion (*Digha* II. 1; *Majjhima* I. 12). His main purpose in seeking admission in to the Order was to obtain the divine sight; he got it; the device must have been easy and not difficult.

Meditative light is of common occurrence in meditation; any meditationist practising meditation for some weeks regularly might have perceived this sort of light. This general phenomenon shows that this light is inherent in meditation. It is of course not stable; the diverse causes of its disappearance are enumerated by the Master in the Upakkilesa sutta (*Majjhima* III. 28). In this sutta the Master has narrated his own experience before the attainment of his final Enlightenment.

Moreover, the first and the last of the above suttas, Mahāli and Upakkilesa, are admirably natural and without the least sign of exaggeration and supernormal and phenomenal display. These two suttas, if read and re-read attentively, should not fail to convince us of the bona fides of the supernormal vision and light. If we get convinced thereof, we shall have removed the greatest impediment blocking our path to their attainment. For vicikiccha or doubt, the fifth nivaraṇa does not let any trance to appear, arise, or occur.

Retrospection of Back Phases

A brief survey of what has been dealt with in the back phases of this research would be helpful for understanding clearly what is to follow in this phase. This is not a revision of the previous phases, nor even a synopsis of what has been said in them. This is after all a brief survey of the links running through the successive treatments of the main topics and allied facets of the Buddha's system of meditation in the previous back phases.

Hence this survey will have to run backwards from the last phase to the first; this sort of linking upwards may keep up the main subject of this phase always in focus and we may not lose sight of it in the midst of previous topics. The general plan of this research has been to present each phase as complete in

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itself as possible; this objective has been followed up and adhered to so far; the reader should have also likewise found it.

This is as much a work of research as a work on its practical utility. This work therefore aims at disclosing the interior secrets of Early Buddhism through a studious investigation of the original sources; the presentation of the labour in the long and time-consuming research in a really practical and graduated manner is another difficult aim; there is still a third aim at bringing all these matters in an easy readable form to the general readers. These aims might have suffered through my own limited knowledge and poor experience in such a vast and serious subject as the title of the work would suggest. The objective of this entire plan is however the faithful representation of the Master's views on the betterment of human society.

The main subject of this phase under research is the gradual unfoldment of the supernormal knowledge of human destiny, individual and in a way collective. This knowledge presupposes the knowledge of the remembrance of one's own past lives treated of in the preceding sixth phase. The succession of one's own past lives might give us also a lead to a reliable glimpse of others' past lives differing of course in their contents. Human life is similar; moral motivation of action is also similar; the fruit of effective actions must therefore be also similar; this conception is the basis of an attempt at the visualization of future destiny.

The similarity of human minds is directly inferred through the supernormal knowledge of mind-to-mind perception dealt with in the sixth phase. This inference is obviously an axiom; for the phrase 'attānam upamam katvā' or 'comparing oneself (with others)' in the *Dhammapada* (verse 129 or 130) indicates it. The remembrance of past events would necessarily presuppose the mind-to-mind knowledge.

The mind is after all one of the six senses; the development of other senses, especially the eye and the ear, if possible, would give us a lead and confidence in developing the mind-to-mind knowledge. The observation of one's own and others' mind prepares the disposition of remembering or to remember the past. Hence the subject of the sixth phase presupposes that of

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the fifth phase, wherein the development of supernormal senses has been fully dealt with.

Moreover, the faith or trust in what the original works say is generated and established by the close scrutiny of their so-called and so understood auspicious beginning. The facet of Buddhism has also been fully investigated in the introductory part of the fifth phase. When we are intent on some supernormal dhammas, their acquisition, and their development, we should turn our attention, say, to some guru. Now the Master should be considered the most infallible guru of his own system. Hence the spontaneous formula for his adoration has been closely studied therein.

The development of the particular items of supernormal knowledge presupposes confidence in the development of supernormal powers of iddhi. This is therefore fully described in the fourth phase. As the first step towards it, the phenomenon of Levitation has been taken up therein to show that this feat is possible and organizable even now. Then it would not be difficult to conceive that the organization of iddhi through resolve and mind-made body must be as natural as that of Levitation.

The subject treated of in the fourth phase would presuppose the general principles, in accordance with or of which the items of iddhi could be performed; this is therefore fully explained in the third phase. The device of kasiṇa is introduced and described, inasmuch as this method has been highly recommended, in the commentaries and the *Visuddhi-magga*, for iddhi. Hence the four elemental kasiṇas have been treated of in the third phase.

The four colour kasiṇas are however fully and extensively described in the sixth phase only. The reason for doing so is to let the four elemental kasiṇas not become mixed up with the four colour ones and also to let the former be fully utilized in the organization of iddhi-vidha. Morever, the gradual trances are themselves competent to be channelled in the desired item of iddhi and Abhiññā, as ostensibly practised by the Master himself. As far as possible, we should not also be diverted to other devices than those practised and adopted by the Master himself.

The whole structure of Buddhism principally and in principle

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also rests on the successful organization of the nine gradual trances and absorptions and cessation. None of the eight supramundane paths and fruits can be obtained without the organization of one of these trances. The immediate instrument is of course right deliberation; the highly thoughtful intellectuals can and could obtain arhatship even through deliberation alone (sukkha-vipassakas); for any deep thinking even through deliberation may eventually turn into a first trance.

But without obtaining at first and then deliberating over the states of form and formless trances and absorptions, none can attain the so-called double-sided (ubhato-bhāga) Liberation (vimutti). Hence the direct device of trance must have priority over artificial devices such as advocated in non-canonical works. Once we lose sight of the gradual trances, we might lapse in the real objective of the Master's system. Nevertheless we have to try what is so highly and insistently recommended by Buddhaghosa.

Now the gradual trances and absorptions have been fully explained in the first and second phases of this research. The first phase depicts the four form trances; the fourth stage of form trance is said to be the foundation trance; each and every item of iddhi and abhiññā, or supernormal power and knowledge, will have to be organized on the foundation trance. After the form trance, the natural sequence is the formless trance or absorption; this has been fully dealt with in the second phase.

The form trance is the principal key to the Master's system; hence the first phase of this research is virtually the key to all the later phases. The direct method of organizing this trance has been fully described in this first phase. Although the formless absorption (samāpatti) has been fully explained in the second phase, a brief resume and also a short revision of the first phase have been given in the second phase. Besides these, the most important sutta of the Sutta-Piṭaka, the Sati-Paṭṭhāna, or the cultivation of memory, has been fully and extensively explained in this very secnd phase.

Since the fundamental basis of the Buddhistic philosophy is the Four Noble Truths, this subject has also been introduced in the second phase. The allied topics and facets of the principal subject have been introduced in each phase whenever the context

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required them. Intricate topics have been introduced in a simple manner, leaving out complicated and unnecessary details. Miracles and supernormal manifestations have been given, when the context demanded them, apropos of the point at issue and never to display their exuberance. In short, the realistic and empirical views of the Master have been always kept intact with our own practical approach towards their realization in these phases. If the savants find anything herein amiss and the readers obscure, the blame is entirely due to my incompetence and limited knowledge.

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II

Cutupapata Nana or Knowledge of Beings Dying and Beings Born

Birth and Death

THE EVENT of the birth and death of human beings is universal, but we are not aware of our own birth; we can, however, be aware of death, if we try to do so. We see how a new being is born as a baby; but we cannot be aware of how a living being dies; we are, however, aware of a dead body. The body, according to Buddhism is made up of four elements and their derivatives, which are wholly material; this is therefore seen, felt, and perceived through the rest of the senses also; the mind knows that the body is dead. A dead body is the sign of death, but it is not all.

Out of these two phenomena, birth is very complicated due to its different factors; it is very difficult to assign causes to its individual difference from others; our commonsense is helpless in understanding these intricate causes. Most of the Oriental religions and philosophies speak of birth-generating (prārabdha, paṭisandhi-janaka) action (karma, kamma); it seems dogmatic to us; for we see directly neither its operation, nor the birth—showing signs of our previous existence, let alone the previous action. Many differences; from birth throughout our life-span

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to death, are really seen and found among us; these are explained by the matured fruits of previous actions done by ourselves in these varied scriptural works. Nevertheless, we are not convinced thereof.

Buddhism also does the same; it does, of course, introduce more sophisticated laws of kamma and its operation. If we choose to deny any previous cause of present birth, we shall have also to deny any link whatsoever in the past and the future with our present birth. This total denial would negate the main thesis of almost all the Oriental systems of religion and philosophy including Buddhism, particularly the thesis under reserarch in this phase.

We have been keeping this reserach from plunging itself into any dogmatism so far; but the present thesis from its very nature cannot do away with the doctrine of effective kammas and their fruits in the past and the future. This acceptance would automatically entail the natural phenomena of present birth and death and also future rebirth. Even the tentative acceptance of this doctrine only would not fully explain what we are going to describe in this phase.

The best way to escape this dilemma would be to organize this knowledge and go on witnessing the changing phenomena of death and rebirth, at first without the latter being connected with the present. When one is assured thereof that the present must have influenced the relative rebirth, then and there only the organizer might assign the cause to the effect. Thus proceeding without bias, he might verify for himself the tradition or the doctrine satisfactorily.

Now we shall take up the topic of death, easier of the two topics, and see if we can make out anything of it.

Death and its Remembering for Knowledge

The remembering of death in all its aspects is one of the favourite devices for the attainment of knowledge pregnant with several benefits. This device of 'maraṇa-anussati' or the remembering of death or dying is given in several places in the text, but fully explained in the *Visuddhi-magga* (VIII). The law that any being who is born must die is a commonplace. But the neglect in realizing this simple truth is probably the cause of

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our neglecting the spiritual means of bettering our destiny. Even if the controversial destiny be set aside for the time being neglect of the inevitable but uncertain visit of death may cause a lamentable catastrophe when it happens unexpectedly.

Hence the remembering of death or dying is highly praised in Buddhism. Buddhaghosa enumerates in the said chapter several kinds of death; Arahantas' (Liberated Ones') death is the termination of the mundane sorrows and suffering; the momentary death is the natural dissolution of dhammas in an ever-changing flux; the conventional death is found in such usages in words as, a tree is dead, a metal is dead; but these deaths are not meant herein. He says further:

"What is meant (here) is the two kinds, timely death (kāla-maraṇa), and untimely death (akāla-maraṇa). Therein the timely death occurs at the total consumption of merit (or demerit), or of life-span, or of both. The untimely death occurs when the current life is terminated through a fatal accident." Explaining these, he explains them in detail.

> Therein, if, even with the presence of abundant factors favourable to the prolongation of life, death occurs only due to the matured vipāka (result of fruit) of birth-generating kamma, this is called death at the total consumption of (puñña-kkhayena). And if, with the absence of life-span-limit, time, food, etc., death occurs at the expiration of life like that of persons currently living only for one hundred years, this is called the death at the total consumption of life-span.

This is the explanation of a timely death. In short, timely death is practically the same as we take it for a normal life-span without accidents.

Untimely death is explained as the termination of life through some extraordinary calamity or through fatal attacks with weapons. This is also the same as we consider it; the extraordinary calamity, however, is rare event described in the text. The sum and substance is that the termination of the vital faculty in the present life is defined here as 'maraṇa' or

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death. A dead body without consciousness is the sign of physical death.

The remembering of death consists of bringing to mind as many factors, circumstances, conditions, possibilities, and dangers fatal to life as one can imagine. The purpose is to visualize death always near at hand and be prepared to die at any moment of life. The text, commentary, and the *Visuddhimagga* say that this remembrance of death is of immense value. If it be so, we are doing great injury to our society by giving its members the false hope of prolongation of life even at their last moment. The preparation for death and something beyond it is probably necessary beforehand and the remembrance of impending and inevitable death may be the right path to effect this preparedness of our mind or at least our mental disposition.

Buddhaghosa gives us many things to think over with this remembrance. The main trend of thought is to be directed towards the execution of our duty then and there; for the visit of death is quite uncertain. We should always bear in mind that the sign of death disturbed the mind of our Bodhisattva so much that he left his home forthwith. This mental disposition must have contributed much to his enunciation of the first noble truth of suffering.

There are several instances in the text and many in the commentary, when monks at the approaching terror of death deliberated over the dhammas and obtained the knowledge of Liberation in spite of the physical pangs they suffered. Even if some exaggerations in these instances be admitted, we cannot undervalue the fortitude of those who might have made it a sort of hobby for a very long time.

The instance of the *fortitude* of liberated monks, to cite from the text, is found in the elder Upasena (*Samyutta* 35.69) and Channa (*Majjhima* III. 44); these are only two out of many. And to cite a few cases from the commentary, we find the elder Tissa of Sāvatthi, several out of thirty monks practising kammaṭṭhāna in a certain wilderness, and even later the elder Pita Malla of Tambapaṇṇi, showing exceptional fortitude under the pangs of approaching death (Papañcasūdani on Satipaṭṭhāna sutta, introductory section). As a contrast, the terror of

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approaching death drove Subrahmā and Sakka to seek the protection of the Master. (ibid.)

Vision of Passing Beings

In the preceding section, we have discussed the topic of Death for Remembrance and shown that it is one of the regular devices of Kammaṭṭhānas in Buddhism. As such it is as authentic as any of the devices of meditation practised throughout the world. A device is to be evaluated by the benefits it bestows on its practisers. We have already discussed its benefits also in the foregoing section. Death, however, is looked upon as something inauspicious and undesirable. We shall discuss the latter point also.

The Kārikā (memorial verse) of Sāṅkhya philosophy by Iśvara-kriṣṇa begins with sorrow (dukkha, dukkha in Pāli); now sorrow in the very beginning is not auspicious; but the annotator, Ḍhuṇḍirāja, quotes the famous commentator, Vācaspati Miśra, as commenting on it that it is not a blemish; for its eradication (apaghāta) is surely auspicious (maṅgala). The auspicious beginning is, however, defended in Sāṅkhya sūtra, probably a work posterior to the above (Kārikā; Sāṅkhya-sutra V. 1 sūtra).

Moreover, the Master has preached on the devolution or destruction of the world at first in order to deal extensively with the evolution of the new world (*Digha* III. 3 for Antara-kappa; ibid. 4 for Mahā-kappa). Similarly, in order to present the new life with a new birth or rebirth, we are bringing in death or the cessation of life at first. The eradication of recurring deaths is only possible through the attainment of complete Nibbāna, the way to which is claimed to have been discovered by the Master.

We know by various means of information that a huge and immense number of human beings has died since the world began. The number might even greatly exceed that of dead or dying persons ever seen by yogins; but the clearness and uniqueness of the vision of passing beings by the yogins can never be matched in the least by our numerical idea. The purpose is also quite different in the former vision from the latter idea.

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The result of such a vision is far-reaching, whereas that of ours is merely the satisfaction of curiosity or inquisitiveness.

It is, however, not clear how this device is organized and practised. Our savant says: "The knowledge, by which the dying and being born of the beings is known, is for the purpose of Divine-eye knowledge." This is not clear; but the sub-commentator says more clearly: "Only by the divine-eye knowledge, the death and the birth of beings are known." Evidently Buddhaghosa has nothing to say about the process of this knowledge more than what the Master has stated cryptically about it.

This knowledge was obtained by the Master before the perfect Enlightenment. The process he followed was the organization of four form trances; when his mind became fully purified and tranquillized, he directed and bent his mind for this knowledge. Then he says:

Through Divine-eye pure and ultra-human I (did) see beings dying and being born, and excellent, ugly and fine, debased and dignified." The commentary refers to the *Visuddhimagga* for the meaning of the passage, but adds:

"Since there is no need of the preparatory work (parikamma-kiccam) tor the Great Beings (Mahā-sattas) who have completed the perfections, they just directing (their) mind remember many former lives and see beings through divine-eye. . . ." (*Majjhima* I. 4). Evidently the commentary is itself in the dark as regards its preparatory device and totally depends for the latter on the divine sight. But we shall investigate whether or not there is specific practice for this knowledge too.

In the Sāmañña-phala sutta (Dīgha I. 2), the Master illustrates this passage described of course in the third person by means of an elucidatory simile as follows:

> "As for example. Mahārāja! (Ajātasattu), let there be a palace in the middle of a square. Therein standing, a man with the eyes to see should see entering the house and also persons coming of it; (he should also see) persons roaming about from one street to another, and also sitting on the middle of the square. To that man it should occur so: 'These persons enter the house; these persons come out if the house;

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these persons roam about from one street to another; these persons are seated in the middle of the square.' In the same way, Mahārāja!. . . the monk . . . sees through meditative eye.....the beings dying and being born. . .

The above simile is probably the vision perceptible to a yogin through the divine-eye. Nothing could have explained it better than this simile. Let us see if we can make it amenable to our purpose. The commentary applies the simile to the description of the knowledge in this manner:

Therein the physical (produced by the former kamma, that is, karaja) body of the monk should be looked upon like the palace standing in the square of the city. The monk (yogin) who has obtained this divine-eye is like the man with the eyes to see standing in the palace. Those who enter the mother's womb by means of germinational consciousness are like the persons entering the house: those who come out of the mother's womb are like the persons coming out of the house. Those beings who roam from birth to birth are like the persons roaming from one street to another. Those beings who are born in the different places of the three planes of existence are like the persons seated in the open air in the middle of the square.

The application of the said simile to the description of this knowledge shown above correctly reproduces the doctrinal points too. The present body is thought to be produced by our former kamma (karaja-kāya); a person after death is said to germinate, through the means of the heart (hadaya-vatu) and the resultant consciousness, in the foetus, the first moment of which is called the paṭisandhi viññana or germinational consciousness. The mention of heart-base does not mean an actual transmigration; it is neither the individual (puggala), nor the being (satto); with the resultant consciousness the heart-base is not joined, but both of these two principles are conceived as simultaneous only at the germinating moment. This particular point is very tricky in Buddhistic psychology.

The culmination of the comparison of the simile in the doctrine is reached at the final conclusion as below:

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The discernment of beings appearing in the three planes of existence by the monk (yogin) who sits directing the mind for the divine-eye knowledge is like the discernment of those persons by the man standing on the upper floor of the palace. This is told only for the smooth understanding of the precept. In the Formless (Āruppe) plane however the divine-eye has no reach.

The divine-eye can grasp visible forms only; the plane where there is no form or visible objects, must necessarily lie beyond its reach. Hence the commentator has evidently corrected his above statement regarding three planes of existence; for they mean the kāma-dhātu or material plane, the form or rūpāvacara, and arūppo or the formless plane; the last plane is therefore excluded. This long simile illustrated by the Master in the precept plainly shows that this sort of vision is possible.

We must bear in mind that the simile is not an enunciation of a doctrine, nor is it a description of an actual experience. In short, a simile, however elaborate, cannot take the place of a precise statement of any dhamma. But we have a number of appropriate similes in Buddhism, which are widely appreciated. In a way the sutta Piṭaka abounds in similes; at places we feel that a straight statement, instead of a simile, would have been more precise and useful. The Master himself has spoken rather in similes in places where we cannot apply them correctly to the dhammas delivered and intended by him.

Critical Study of this Simile

The simile illustrated in the preceding section presents a few anomalies, which should be closely scrutinized. The first difficulty is the vision of dying persons or beings in general. How are we to understand it like persons coming out of the house textually, not as explained in the commentary? Textually, the Master should have also given a simile to be applicable to dying persons. The dying persons might have been exemplified in the simile as persons coming out of the house; but the commentary does not do anything from the simile to the dying persons; the royal listener might have expected an appropriate simile to the latter too.

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But it is understandable; for nothing goes out of the body at death. When the simile is silent about the dying persons, the vision can be had only of the beings born. If so, the first part, 'cuta' (fallen or dead), of the compound word becomes superfluous. Buddhaghosa has, however, explained the compound word 'cuta-upapāta', which is textually analyzed as 'cavamāna upapajjamāna', thus:

> Herein those at the moment of death or birth cannot be seen through divine-eye. But the dying (persons) are those who are near death and will or shall presently die. The (persons) being born are those who have germinated and just appeared (somewhere). This is the purport. Such persons dying and being born in such manners (as explained) are seen (by the monk). This is what is shown (here). (*Visuddhimagga* XIII. para 76). This explanation is sophisticated but in conformity with the laws of Buddhistic psychology.

Commenting on the above observation of Buddhaghosa, Dhammapāla has considered it and found it correct thus:

> It is not possible to see (person dying and being born at the moment of death and birth, on account of the moment's changeableness and some objects' extreme subtleness; moreover the stimulus (ārammaṇa) of divine-eye is current (paccupanna); that is also the fore-existing condition (purejāta paccāya); nor does the form and formless element arise without the preparatory work of attention (āvajjana); nor can the appearing or disappearing object (rūpa) become the factor of support (or stimulus, ārammaṇa). Hence it is well said (by Buddhaghosa) that 'it is not possible to see the rūpa (person) at the moment of death and birth through divine-eye'.

The commentary on this passage of the two suttas (*Dīgha* I.2: *Majjhima* I.4) is not helpful in this respect. The commentary on the Yamaka, the sixth book of the *Abhidhamma* (II.3. on Niyama-lakhaṇam), has given a general rule on the understanding of uppāda and nirodha, or birth and cessation. During the

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life-span between the first moment of birth and the last moment of death or cessation, there are innumerable moments of changing matter and mind. Hence the heap of intermediate moments is not shown; the first moment of birth and the last moment of death or cessation are (only herein) shown, for they are easy to be so shown.

If what the commentary on the Yamaka says be true and generally followed, the 'cutūpapāta' of this knowledge is surely a general term and represents the life-span including death and birth. Otherwise, the intermediate moments of life will also be unknowable due to their momentary nature. In the miscellaneous (pakiṇṇaka) section further on, Buddhaghosa observes:

> Therein, although the supports (stimuli) of the Mind-to-mind knowledge and Destiny (yathā-kamma-upaga) knowledge are the past (atīta), the support of the Mind-to-mind knowledge out of them is the mind during past seven days (as well as the current—sub-commentary); ...whereas the support of the Destiny-knowledge is only the past volition (cetanā)."

This shows that our savants have forgotten, in their sophisticated arguments against the knowability of death and birth moments, to tell us what the Master had intended in defining the said knowlege as 'cutūpapāta'. If the Master did not see the dying persons, it is difficult to conceive how he followed the particular rebirths in the said conditions. So we shall not be far from the truth, if we follow the textual passage. The Master has given us his experience through the above-described simile; he saw the people dying (cavamāne), no matter if the very last moment of death was missed by him; he also saw those dying persons, after their death, having their rebirth, no matter if the very first moment of their germination was similarly missed by him.

The argument presented above was to show that our savants try to refute any possible opponents on minute points of controversy, while the main points are left insufficiently explained. This is the reason why the commentary makes difficult reading in spite of its usefulness in matters historical, literary, clerical, and folk-lore. Had our savants not blundered so primitively in

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their detailed explanatory description of our physical world and astronomy which have been shown in the section 'Regions or Abodes of Habitation' above, we might have similarly blundered by taking everything they wrote for the correct explanation of the text. The explanations they give are indeed subject to correction by comparison with other relevant textual passages.

The stereotyped passages in the text are again really a disappointment to any researcher in the Pāli Sutta-Piṭaka. For instance, this passage regarding this knowledge of persons dying and being born is found in identical words in the relative suttas of the *Dīgha, Majjhima* and *Aṅguttara Nikāyas*; the difference in a few suttas of the *Majjhima* is the first person infinite verbs, instead of the third person in other suttas. The simile is indeed wanting in other suttas excepting the Sāmañña-Phala sutta.

We have reasons to believe that the Master's preachings were not all alike; some preachings were surely identical with those of his particular disciples. This marvel was probably effected by the Master and some of his disciples to astound the listeners seeking to verify these preachings. The listeners have expressed their admiration for the complete tally, word for word, in such two preachings. It was not a general rule. The learning by repetitions (Peyyāla) of the text of the preaching was at fault; this short device might have obliterated many differences in the original preaching or discourse. Otherwise, the peyyāla, for depicting the old and aged condition even of the Master could not have been used so indiscriminately in the text.

Hence we have to make the best use of the extant passage of this knowledge illustrated by the said simile. It gives us a picture of real experience. Buddhaghosa says: "This visible object comes to the path of the eye of knowledge; then this appears to be as if seen through the physical eye (mansacakkhunā dissamānam viya hoti)..." This is a definite statement as to how the vision appears to a yogin.

It is to be noticed that actual events of persons dying and being born are normal and in the material plane (kamāvacara); whereas the vision seen by the yogin is supernormal and in the form place; for the supernormal vision even of material things and events is seen or obtained through the mental eye of the mind in form trance. The evidence of the form trance is the

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lightness and clearness of the vision obtained in the state of mental silence, awareness, and tranquillity.

The Master must have seen the vision of persons dying as that of many varieties of suffering so vividly depicted by him in many suttas. There are several instances when he had foreseen the imminent death of several persons, for instance, that of Pukkusāti *Majjhima* III. 40 commentary), of Dhaniya Gopa (Sutta-nipāta I.2 Dhaniya-sutta commentary), etc. We cannot, however, imagine that the Master knew it, that he did not see it; this supposition is most unlikely. Buddhaghosa also says; "He sees the beings'—means—'he espies the beings as if through the physical eye of men." This is the divine sight.

Vision of Rebirths

There would probably be less difficuty in visualizing rebirths than in doing the beings passing away. The simile presented and discussed in the previous two sections is rather applied in the commentary in a conventional way different from what the Master might have intended. The word 'geha' as house in the simile cited was applied to the method's womb; but the Master, in his first utterance immediately after his Enlightenment, has obviously likened the same word to the body (*Dhammapāda* verse no. 153); 'gaha-kāraka' or house-builder used therein implies the body and not the womb; and 'geha' is only another form of 'gaha', or house.

It is certainly unconventional to interpret a word differently from that of the definite statement given in the commentary; but let us try if we can do so here. The commentary has likened the entry into and exit from the womb to the entry into and exit from the 'geha' (house) in the given simile; this sort of application is quite inappropriate in the context. The said simile may be interpreted something like the following:

The palace (pāsāda) used in the request of Sahampati Brahmā (*Mahāvagga* I.5) is explained as the palace full of Dhamma and full of wisdom (dhamma-maya, paññā maya) and is referred to the Buddha. It may mean herein a high place where from the yogin clearly sees the vision of persons entering into and coming out of the house. The house may imply the body, not the womb. The exit from the house, that is, the body, should

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have meant physical death, when our consciousness (viññāṇa) leaves the body. The entry into the house, that is the new body, should have meant rebirth or the reappearance, when our consciousness germinates in a foetus or in some other kind of medium for existence than a human being. The roaming about in the streets must be the round of births, as given in the commentary. The sitting down in the middle of the square may mean the residence in happy or heavenly abodes. This much is found in the simile. The spectator is certainly the yogin with the divine eye; the view obtained by the man standing on the upper floor of the palace is obviously the vision of the yogin through his divine eye.

Moreover, the request of the Brahmā to the Buddha in the said verse contains the simile of the palace (pāsāda), also found in Vyāsa's commentary of the *Yogasūtra* (I.47) as 'prāsāda (pāsāda in Pāli). This verse (śloka) is spoken of the 'gathā' (the same in Pāli too) of the 'supreme sage' (paramarṣi), by Miśra and Bhikṣu. In the sub-commentary named 'Patañjala rahasya', Raghavananda explains the word as faultlessness (niṣkaluṣatā). This similarity of the word and the verse shows, by the way, the very ancient tradition of the "gāthā" in praise of the Enlightened. The Pāli commentary is therefore doubly mistaken in taking it as the body (karaja-kāya) of the monk. This matter has been given here in some detail to show that the commentator and the commentary are not to be solely depended upon. The absence of clear explanation of this knowledge in the text and the commentary shows its real source in the Master's experience and regular teaching.

The Master had plenty of visions of rebirths, as can be learnt from many suttas. Even if he had none of them in his household life, the first of the such visions was when he directed his attention to this knowledge under the Bodhi tree in the second watch of the night of his Enlightenment. The second occasion was when he adverted to it on the said request of the mysterious Sahampati Brahamā. This Brahmā had acquired the capacity of becoming the overlord of the extensive Brahmaloka by his devotion to renunciated life under the preceding Buddha Kassapa. He has given his short reference to the Buddha thus:

Formerly, Bhante! I lived the renunciated life under Kassapa

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Sammā Sambuddha. There (then) also I was known as 'Sahako Bhikkhu, Sahakko Bhikkhu'. That I, Bhante! by contemplating on and developing these very five faculties (as you are considering over their benefits) of meditation, casting off desire in the desirable objects, after the dissolution of the body, after death, I was born in the excellent Brahma-loka. There also I am known as 'Brahmā Sahampati, Brahmā Sahampati! (*Samyutta* V. 48. 57 Sahampati-Brahma-sutta).

This Brahmā is closely connected with the Master's life; he is a frequent visitor to the Master; it is also said that he is the Overlord of the Brahmaloka system of this world of ours. There are also other Brahmās and other or some so-called Pacceka Brahmās too. It is also recorded that there was another Mahā-brahmā in the time of Kassapa Buddha. The internal evidence of supernormal evidence is wonderfully prolific in the Pāli *Tipiṭaka*. But such regions themselves cannot be located anywhere in the known or rather conjectured cosmic worlds.

The commentaries have also wonderful consistency internally and also mutually with certain minor differences. For example, we have seen above in the commentary of the Sāmaññā-Phala sutta that the divine eye has no reach in the formless region (āruppe). But we find that the Master knew his former teachers' recent death and reappearance in the third and fourth formless regions, respectively. Of course a hidden and unnamed deity (devatā) at first informed him of their recent death. But immediately the vision of their death and reappearance appeared to him (Mahāvagga, ibid).

We would naturally ascribe the vision to this knowledge, but the commentary on the Mahāvagga says that it was the knowledge of omiscience. Had it not mentioned the latter word, we would have concluded that the two commentaries were differing on this major topic. For indeed none of the sages absorbed in the four formless regions visited the Master during his lifetime, nor did the Master visit these regions. From the Jātaka (No. 99 Paro-sahassa), we learn:

"He (the sage Bodhisatto) telling (them at the last time) 'There is Nothing' was born in the Ābhassara (Second Form) Brahma-loka. For the Bodhisattas, even if they are the gainers

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of Formless Absorptions, do not take their birth in the Formless Region (Āruppe), on account of their being inappropriate (Abhabba) place (for the Bodhisattos)." This is probably due to their first original resolve to complete the perfections of a Bodhisattva-career. The sojourn or life-span in these regions is purposelessly aeons long.

The vision of rebirths must have been seen clearly by the Master; otherwise he could not have declared many monks, nuns, and laywomen appearing in higher regions after their death. The gap between the two events seems pretty long, not immediate. The three suttas 'Giñjakāvasatha' 1st, 2nd, and 3rd (Samyutta V. 55. 8 to 80 suttas) inform us that the Master declared, in Giñjakāvasatha in Ñāṭika, the definite destiny of some six hundred sixty persons in the next world.

Out of this number, fifty laymen were non-returners (anāgāmins), ninety-one were once-returners (sakadāgāmins); five hundred and six were stream-entrants (sotāpannas) in the next world. These are all laymen of Nādikā, Nāṭika, or Ñāṭikā: this picture is really very creditable to the preaching capacity of the Master; for the stages of Liberation the deceased laymen attained before they died are very high even in those early times when the Master was present. It is all in Ñāṭikā.

Therein two particular monks were declared as liberated doubly in insight, as well as in gradual nine trances. One nun was a non-returner; seven particular laymen were also non-returners; two lay persons were in the first and second stages. How should all these persons have been seen in the other world? Evidently in a clear vision of this knowledge. These instances could be at least multiplied by thousands, excluding the mass conversion, so characteristic of the main function of the Buddha. This should convince us of the real existence of such a knowledge as this.

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III

Organization of Exit and Entry

Practice of Vivid Mental Deliberation

THIS SUPERNORMAL knowledge of the exit and entry (cutūpapāta) of sentient (saviññāṇaka) beings, unlike other branches of knowledge, has and probably had textually no specific device. The Master must have however taught his disciples some particular device for this knowledge too. But we find none of these devices in the text in the commentary. In spite of this apparent handicap, the real existence of this knowledge, as already discussed in the preceding chapter, is itself a clue to this knowledge.

Other teachers or leaders of different ascetic orders knew or atleast pretended to know something of knowledge, as is evident from some mention made about it in some suttas. The Master himself seems to admit our supposition. For instance in the very first sūtta of the Dīgha, the Brahmajāla, other Samaṇa-Brāhmaṇas are also credited by the Master with supernormal knowledge which is gained through samādhi, and upon which they base different theories about individuals and worlds. The naked ascetic, Pāthika-putta, of Vesāli had pretended to know the fate of Ajita, the Licchavi general (*Dīgha* III. 1.)

This knowledge consists of two parts: the first part is the vision of beings dying; this vision obviously belongs to our material world; hence our endeavour should be at first directed

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to it. The first question would arise as to what kind of vision we might expect to have; in other words, what kind of vision would satisfy our curiosity? It is, therefore, necessary to bring that sort of picture before our mind that would satisfy us. Imagination is not recommended in this system; we want something factual and realistic. Deliberation would help us in the initial stage.

The initial factors of the first form trance are sa-vitakka and sa-vicāra or the initial and sustained applications of thought, as fully described in the first phase of this research. This is practically deliberation. In some of the ten devices of remembrance, say that of death, we have to meditate with the help of deliberation. But deliberation will not lead us to trance. Hence we shall have to visualize what we deliberate; this is the key to obtain a state of samādhi.

The discussion of sub-commentators Miśra, Bhikṣu, etc., on the topic of 'sa-vitarka' (sa-vitakka in Pāli), samāpatti (absorption) in the *Yogasūtra* (I, 42) and its commentary, or detailed exposition, is very interesting, especially that of Bhikṣu. It is worth reading closely. The sum and substance is that the perceived object is mixed with the knowledge and the name concerning it; due to this mixture of three different dhammas mixed together (vikalpas), the real nature of the object under observation gets obscured. When this mixture occurs in meditating on the object of meditation, this stage of samādhi is called 'savitarka samāpatti'.

But it is to be noticed that the first trance (in Pāli; sa-vitakka sa-vicāra) does not exactly correspond to the above samapatti. In deliberative meditation, however, words, names, or significant indicators are used to bring about the desired conception or vision before the mind in the initial stage only. So the Buddhistic form trance even in the first stage assumes the state of what is termed 'nirvitarka samāpatti' in the *Yogasūtra* (1.43), or absorption devoid of all the vikalpas mentioned above. This result in the form trance is generally due to the non-conception of the ego from the beginning.

In Buddhism, deliberation in the device of vipassana (discriminatory discernment) is invariably used for the attainment of the knowledge of Liberation. But the vivid deliberation is

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recognized as productive of clearer and stabler knowledge in most cases. The highly praised device of observing the ten disagreeable states of dead bodies can be cited here; these states are actually observed and not only deliberated over imaginary corpses. In some devices, of course, both the methods are employed; for example, in the observation of all the thirty-two constituents of the body, deliberation is used in perceiving the internal ones not visible to the eyes directly.

Hence in the preparatory stage of this knowledge of 'cuti' or death, deliberation over the huge number of deaths occurring all over the world daily and even hourly would be very helpful; actually for the remembrance of one's own death all the possible circumstances in causing death are brought forth in the mind. This is a technique to realize death as always near at hand and be careful of performing one's duty in real earnest.

This knowledge of death in procession should not be as disagreeable as we might preconceive. Now we might fairly conceive that ten thousand persons, in round numbers, of all ages and stations in life die hourly in the whole world. In one sitting of meditation, it would not be unrealistic to think that so many persons die and pass out of sight, leaving their dead body as evidence. The number might be reduced to an actual death-rate and also proportionately to suit one's country as a whole, on the supposition that the world population currently is forty-four hundred million in round numbers, and the annual rate of deaths two per cent also in round numbers on the average.

When these deaths appear in a meditative vision, it might certainly present itself like a procession of dying persons. Imagination is not employed nor implied in Buddhistic meditation; deliberation is of course allowed in the initial stage; it is however the divine sight that may bring the vision clearer before the mind or in the mental field. What is brought about by divine sight may be expected to be real; it is for this reason that imagination should not be employed; otherwise the vision would be false.

The textual word is 'cuti', meaning death; but the commentary has followed the textual equivalent 'cavamāna' or

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dying and interpreted it as 'near death and going to die presently' (Visuddhi-magga XIII, para 76). Since the last moment of death cannot be seen even through the divine eye, at the moment next to it however, the dead body would or should be seen, if the divine eye is as efficient as the text and the commentary tell us again and again. This dead body would have been the sure sign and evidence of death, without troubling the mind with psychological subtleties.

This sort of vision would belong to the world we are currently in direct contact with; this would not have required the acceptance of the doctrine of rebirth from us now and here. When we get assured that this sort of vision is possible through the cultivation of the divine eye, the next step to the vision of new births would present less difficulty. It does not, however, mean that the doctrine itself is discredited. It is only to reconcile the modern view on such things that we criticize them. Otherwise the old doctrine seems to have been generally accepted in those early times.

Instances of such visions of dying or dead persons are rare in the text. We might, however, infer from the incident of an earlier report of a war or battle by Mahāmoggallāna who might have seen the vision of dying combatants in the ensuing conflict. The following extract is from the fourth Pārājika (Excommunication) towards its end:

> "At that time King of Magadha, Seniya Bimbisāra, fighting with the Licchavis, was defeated. Then afterwards, collecting the army, the king defeated the Licchavis. There spread the delighted news in the battle field: 'The Licchavis are defeated by the king.' But earlier the elder Mahāmoggallāna had addressed the monks: 'The King, friends! is defeated by the Licchavis.' The monks were annoyed, resentful, and grumbling: 'How is the elder Mahāmoggallāna saying thus—the King, friends! is defeated by the Licchavis ? But there spread the delighted news in the battle-field: the Licchavis are defeated by the King. The elder Mahāmoggallāna (unduly) claims the ultrahuman power.' They informed (this to) the Blessed One; (the Master said to them:) 'At first, monks! the king was defeated by the Licchavis; then thereafter, collecting

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the army, the King defeated the Licchavis; monks! Moggallāna told the truth. There is no offence (of false declaration), monks! of Moggallāna.

The declaration of supernormal powers without possessing them, except through the undue estimation of them, was punishable by excommunication (pārājika). The correction of the Elder by the Master shows that the scene of the battle was seen by both. Now the question might or would arise as to why the attention was directed to such a mundane scene as this. Both the combatants were devoted followers of Buddhism. It was but natural that their attention should have been directed to the battle scene.

This power does not seem, however, to have been employed by the Master and his disciples generally in public affairs and even in ecclesiastical matters. The attitude of the Master against the utilization of such powers for mundane affairs is patent in the Verañja Kathā (Pārājika I. 1). The Master together with the monks had dwelt for the (12th) rainy season in Verañja. The host forgot to give food to the Master and the monks for the entire three months of the residence. They were obliged to eat powdered raw grains supplied by some caravan merchants sojourning outside Verañja. The elder Moggallāna proposed to feed the monks through supernormal powers, but the Master prohibited this sort of experiment being made by the Elder.

Conception of Entry into New World

Conception may mean in Buddhism any mental grasp ranging from 'manasikāra', or keeping something in mind, to 'diṭṭhi', or some definite idea right or wrong. The conception of some sort of revival after physical death (cuti) is that of rebirth or re-appearance in some new world. This conception of Buddhism and of most Oriental systems of religion and philosophy would appear to us to mean in general our survival in some new world and not our extinction. Such an extinction, as we might conjecture in our imagination is, they say, directly opposed to the law of kamma or karma.

On our rejection of this universal law, they say, the action

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done in the past will be lost without its fruition, and the fruit of action never done before will come in. This will be antagonistic to any world order of morality and virtue or vice. In other words, nothing can happen without an effective cause, and nothing can disappear without it. But we find it hard to believe such a sophisticated argument for our survival beyond death. We expect our extinction without deserving it, through negligence or materialistic obsession.

The reasons of ours in disbelieving the survival are nearly the same as those voiced by the then landlord, Payasi Rājañña, of Setabyā, a town of Kosala between Sāvathi and Kapilavatthu. This nobleman was a well-known disbeliever in the next world, the theory of kamma and its fruition, and life after death. He once had an energetic discussion on this topic with the elder Kumāra Kassapa (*Dīgha* II. 10). The sutta is a long one consisting of 30 pages bristling with apt similes cited by the Elder to the examples experimented on by the opponent.

The sum and substance of his disbelief in the socalled life after death was firstly the non-availability of any living principle (satta or self) within or without the body, while dying or after death; secondly, none of the dead ever returned to tell him even on their acceptance of doing so; thirdly, even pious persons fear death. His experiments with several convicts to detect the self in them are however cruel and ludicrous. The Elder refutes his arguments with fitting similes.

The nobleman was, however, converted by the Elder at the end of the discourse. He established a charity-house and fed and distributed food to monks, ascetics, beggars, etc. The sutta says that he was born in the lower heaven and met another Elder named Gavampati. The internal evidence is obviously perfect; but even such evidence may not fully convince us thereof; for we want something concrete and directly verifiable even now. This sort of evidence or proof is not and would not be currently available, except when we ourselves organize this device; that is of discerning the vision of dying persons who are immediately being born or reappearing in some other world.

The world to which a dying person is reborn will appear new to him, for he has to begin his life there over again. Even if he is born in this very world of ours or his, this world should

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appear new to him. But the dying person may be born in one of other worlds, regions, or abodes, or even so-called heaven or hell. He may or may not remember the life he was leading here; but the place and the body he finds himself in as his own will be new to him. After some time, of course, when he has lived there long enough, the new world will also be appearing as real and old as we feel this world to be.

Nevertheless, all new births do not seem to have been only of those who die here; for the birth rate per thousand of the population of the world is currently exceeding the death rate per thousand. Supposing 16 persons of all ages per thousand die or pass away out of this world, about 32 new births of babies are currently estimated to have been born here. Then the excess of 16 newcomers must have come over here from somewhere else. We shall have then either to discredit the theory or the doctrine of rebirth, or find some plausible answer to this population increase of the world, year after year.

This sort of investigation could only be done or conducted through this knowledge. For this purpose also we separated the 'cutūpapāta', or death and rebirth, into its first and second parts. We have already dealt with the vision of dying persons or dead bodies after death. Now we shall see if we can similarly try to see the vision of new births. These new births might either be the rebirths of the persons dying here or dying somewhere else beyond our knowledge. The divine sight may perhaps help us in the latter case also.

For this reason also we had suggested before not to imagine anything in trying to visualize what we should deliberate in our meditation. Even if we fail in visualizing it, we might arrive at something real in the approaching trance (upacāra samādhi) while deliberating. And imagination might mar even this chance. We should not forget that the supernormal sight may arise in the trance when it is stabilized. Impatience will not produce anything of importance.

Before dealing with the textual and commentatorial device of bringing about this knowledge or vision, we shall consider some points about it. The main emphasis in the said device is placed on the divine eye; without the organization of this eye, the vision of others' rebirths and reappearance cannot be

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seen. Physical and human rebirth is generally understood to germinate in a foetus, while reappearance is to appear in some region with a complete body appropriate to that region. For example, if one is practising a form trance and should die in its perfect remembrance, he or she would appear in the form plane corresponding to the trance with a complete body like the inhabitants of that region.

The said device is evidently a joint endeavour; that is the thought of or concerning the dying person and the visual pursuit of his whereabouts. As otherwise the rebirth only may not signify anything concerning the cause of his fortune or misfortune in the ensuing rebirth. But the device is silent on how this double feat is performed; that is watching the dead or dying and following the invisible principle to its sudden manifestation of survival in the so-called rebirth.

Buddhaghosa's Device of Organizing this Knowledge

The commentary on the relative knowledge of the text almost invariably refers to the *Visuddhi-magga* for its details. It is very rare that we find the commentary going into some detail of the kammaṭṭhāna or device by itself without referring it to the said work. The introductory verse of each commentary on the first four Nikāyas says that the Visuddhi-magga forms an integral part of the commentary under study. This is advantageous as well as disappointing to a researcher who might be trying to discover the original instruction on such devices.

Hence we have to ascribe the device to Buddhaghosa, the author of the said work, instead of doing so to the different commentaries on the relative knowledge. We have reasons to believe that he has, in composing his apparently original work, omitted details minor or superfluous or needless in his eyes. His zeal in presenting a uniform system before us has obliterated even details of value, many of which were probably differing in different commentaries. There is no means to verify how far our savant has given us a true and correct commentatorial version of these devices as understood by the ancient elders.

Accordingly, we are giving the details for the organization

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of this knowledge as found in the thirteenth chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga*. Buddhaghosa deals with it after the knowledge of *one's* own previous or former lives (pubbe-nivāsa) as remembered by himself (anussati). It would obviously seem natural that the knowledge of one's own past lives should be followed by that of others. So this sort of knowledge is termed 'cutūpapāta, which is explained by him as follows:

"In the description of the knowledge of the death (cuti) and the birth (upapāta) of sentient beings (sattānam), (the textual words) 'for the death and birth knowledge' mean for the knowledge of death and birth; by which knowledge the death and birth of beings are known; the purpose is for the knowledge of death and birth, it is told. 'He (the yogin) directs and bends the mind' means—he directs and also bends the preparatory (parikamma) mind (citta). 'He' means—the monk who has (thus) directed the mind.

This sort of explanation would entail the repetition of the text and its comments. Hence we shall avoid the repetition as much as possible and at the same time give his comments only below:

"Dibba (divine) is like the supernormal (nature of divine beings); for the heavenly beings (devas) possess a divine eye-organ, which is produced by (their) meritorious (former) kamma and is unpolluted with (physical) bile, phlegm, blood, etc., which, because of its being freed from defilements, is able even to perceive objects lying far off. This eye of knowledge is also produced by the power of endeavour (Viriya) and contemplation (bhāvanā), and therefore is also like that (of heavenly beings).

We do not, however, know if there are heavenly beings who can see objects lying there as well as here in our physical world. But Dhammapāla, the sub-commentator, says here that the simile of the eyes of heavenly beings is given here to show the

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inferiority of those (Devas') eyes to these (yogic) eyes; for these eyes are astonishing and of more significance than those.

Buddhaghosa says further: "One, who sees (the phenomenon of) death only and not (that of) birth, grasps the theory of annihilation (uccheda-diṭṭhi). One, who sees (the phenomenon of) birth (upapāta) only and not (that of) death (cuti), grasps the theory of the appearance of new beings." We generally see these two phenomena separately; death is seen and we feel that everything is at an end for one who is dead; new birth is likewise seen and we feel that a new being has come up here from nowhere. So these feelings create a mental disposition conducive to the said two theories; these are the annihilation of individual being and the spontaneous birth of new beings, or 'uccheda-diṭṭhi' and 'Adhicca-samuppatti' respectively.

Even to our commonsense, both the theories would give us great doubts. A little diversion here would therefore be necessary; for on the negation or refutation of these two views any further progress in this knowledge might depend. If we die once for all, everything we gain would be lost with respect to our individual self. If our birth is spontaneous, unconditional or without any previous deserts, nothing here might be of any avail. The present birth and uncertain life-span would be a mere fortuitous phenomenon of nature. A dense cloud of pessimism would settle over our society. The humanitarian work would mean substantially nothing to those who undertake it; individual and collective sacrifice would also carry no weight; in short, our spiritual and selfless motive would vanish.

Yogasutra and Commentary Supply Proof

The *Yogusūttra* (II. 9) states the fifth or last main defilement thus: "Abhinivesa (fear of death) is (the defilement) that flows by its own nature and is likewise patent in the learned also." The fear of death is a natural instinct; it is so patent that both the stupid and the learned fear death instinctively. The commentator, sub-commentators, annotators, and others have fully dwelt on this sūtra. It would be enough to give the gist of what they say here for our purpose.

Vyāsa, the principal commentator, says:

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All sentient beings even cherish this intimate prayer (Ātma-āśīr): 'May I not cease to exist, (but) may I exist ! (mā na bhūvam, bhūyasam)'. Neither is this intimate prayer cherished by one who has not experienced death. By this the experience of the previous life (pūrva-janma-anubhava) is understood. It is this fear of death that is a defilement flowing by its own nature (seen) even in a worm. In a just-born worm too, this terror of death, impossible to be known through direct knowledge, inference, or scripture, is characteristic of the conception of annihilation (ucchedadriṣṭi-ātmaka) and measures the death pangs experienced in the previous lives.

He continues:

As this defilement (terror of death) is seen in the most stupid, so is it patent even in the learned who have seen both the ends of the world. Why so ? It is because this instinctive desire (vāsanā) is common to both the accomplished (kuśala) and unaccomplished (akuśala) due to their former experience of suffering at death.

Through this instinctive desire to live and the fear of death observed universally, the commentator tries to establish the doctrine of former birth and death on the basis of common-sense. We might, however, find some causes and reasons for this desire and fear in this very life other than those the commentator has advanced so ingeniously and with genuine erudition.

The discussion on the sūtra and the commentary is continued by one of the most important sub-commentators, Vācaspati Miśra, in his *Tattva-vaiśārad*, the gist of which is as follows:

May I not cease to exist ! that is, let me not be non-existing (but) may I exist ! that is, may I live (for ever) ! within one's self is done (cherished) by all beings. This fear of death does (should) not occur to one who has not experienced death (before). Contextually this (assertion)

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refutes an atheist (nāstika) who denies the births other than the present one. Because of (our) possessing the present body, the experience of (our) former births is inferred. For the birth is the connection (of this being) with the specific kinds of body, faculty, and feeling not possessed before; the experience of it means its possession; this is inferred. How is it ? It is this 'abhiniveśa' (the fear of death).

The above argument of this savant is more subtle; the possession of this body itself is the proof of a similar possession in the previous birth; the example of this proof is this fear of death. Both the data are obviously present.

He expands it (abhiniveśa) further.

This (fear of death) naturally, that is, sub-consciously, flows and is not incidental (āgantuka, a new-comer). This is (seen) even in a just-born worm which is of the lowest consciousness and full of suffering. This is not acquired in this present birth through direct perception, or inference, or authoritative information (āgama). This measures the suffering of death experienced in the former births.

Again he takes up another example and says:

For even a just-born baby is found to be afraid while shuddering at the sight of fatal objects; the baby infers (instinctively) from her own shuddering the proximity of death and is afraid. Fear is found to come out of suffering and the cause of suffering; but in this birth she (the baby) has not experienced death, nor guessed it, nor heard about it, not to speak of her understanding the import of suffering or its cause. Hence there remains the remembrance of that sort of hers; this (remembrance) cannot occur without sub-conscious impression (sanskāra); nor can this impression occur without (previous) experience; nor is this experience of the present birth; so there remains that of the previous birth. The conclusion is that there was her connection with the previous birth.

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From the above argument, the savant shows that the fear of death is universally present in the learned and the stupid. Does it prove our former birth ? It may look doubtful; for this sort of fear might have occurred due to other causes than the unknown previous existence. Commonsense is not as valid as the yogic knowledge we are treating of in this phase. But we cannot ignore the conclusions of great persons who do not depend on the authoritative sources alone for what they say on this subject.

Another sub-commentator, Vijñāna Bhikṣu, in his *Yoga-vārtika*, besides similar comments, adds:

> This fear of death which is the extreme form of pain (or suffering) cannot occur to one who has not experienced it (before); for that sort of fear is seen in the case of the riches of one who has experienced the pain born of the loss of wealth.

Further on, he poses an imaginative question and answers it: "Now let the fear named 'abhiniveśa' be by the experience of the pain of death; why should the experience of the former births be imagined ?—This suspicion has been removed by the phrase (of Vyāsa's commentary)"—meaning the said things already described above. Other more recent sub-commentators or annotators, such as Bhāvāgaṇeśa, Nāgojibhaṭṭa, Rāmānanda, Anantadeva, Sadāśivendra, Rāghavānanda, Hariharānanda, Dāmodara, and Ḍhuṇḍirāja, the last two being foot-noters, also say the same thing. My purpose in quoting these scholars is to show that they have consistently followed Vyāsa's commentary.

Bhojadeva or Bhojarāja, the 11th century scholar-king of Dhārā, has written an independent and lucid annotation on the original sūtra. In his introduction, he writes :

> What is very difficult is left (unexplained); what is clear is taken up and explained with quotations and uselessly in lengthy details with grammatical analyses of compounds; confusion is extended to the listeners (readers) through

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many unprofitable debates in unwanted places; the real objective is thus confused by all annotators.

This sweeping remark was obviously passed on the then annotators of the *Yogasūtra*; this shows that those scholars criticized by him were many but not conversant with practical yoga, so to say.

Nevertheless, he also gives us a similar thing on this subject. He says briefly:

> This defilement of 'Abhiniveśa' is born as fear by the force of the subconscious impression (vāsanā which is) of the experience of the pain of death experienced in the former lives; (it is much as as to say;) 'let my connection with the body and sensuous objects be not broken!'—this daily continuing bondage is found in all the beings from the worm to the Brahmā and is without any (observable) cause.

This causeless fear is necessarily ascribed to the fear of death experienced in former lives.

This conception is further fully expanded in the three sūtras from the 8th to 10th of the fourth part (*Yogasūtra* IV. 8, 9, 10); the commentary and-sub-commentaries thereon are well worth close study. The dangerous chance of rebirth in beasts discussed therein is really disturbing. We may forgo higher rebirths, if we like, but should never be negligent of any chance of being born in lower ones; for once we lapse in the series of lower rebirths, there seems to be no limit of the downward trend. The only way left to us is seemingly the practice of yoga in order to escape such a dangerous trend of future life or existence.

Buddhistic Outlook on Supplying Proof

We do not find in the suttas any proof of the former births on the basis of commonsense such as that given in the preceding section. The title we find is given in the *Dīghanikāya* (II. 10 Pāyāsi-rājañña). The debate between the elder Kumāra Kassapa and the nobleman Pāyāsi was conducted in the Forest of Simsapā of Setabyā lying to the north therefrom. This township

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was in Kosala and lies between Sāvatthi and Kapilavatthu (Vatthugāthā of Suttanipāta V. 1).

The doubt of Pāyāsi centred in the future rebirth and was not expressed as regards the past birth. If the future birth could be proved, the past birth would automatically serve as its proof. The elder's argument, however, is grossly commonsense mixed with the Buddhistic doctrine, and not as subtle and fundamental as that dealt with in the *Yogasūtra* and its commentary and sub-commentaries discussed in the preceding section. The Master has dealt with past and future births, but not given any commonsense proof thereof. He obviously thought it to be superfluous.

The Master has spoken of his direct experience of many a round of past births, as well as that of others' births. So in his eyes any proof on the basis of commonsense was superfluous. He has time and again refuted the theory of adhicca-samuppāda or spontaneous birth, even if some meditationists claimed it to be their direct experience. The Master ascribed it to their forgetfulness of the former births after their long sojourn in the unconsciousness abode (Asaññā-sattā) in some mystic region.

From the suttas it appears that the Master had not come in contact with any serious thinkers who held any theory against the round of births, past and future. Out of the six naked ascetics said to have been of some note, only one, Ajita, held a materialistic view resembling that of the modern age. He said that there are no beings who take up rebirth after death, for he said:

> This person is made up of four elements; when he dies, the (individual) earth element (of his body) goes to the (external) earth element; (similarly) the water element goes to the water element; the fire element goes to the fire element; the air element goes to the air element; the faculties (five senses and the mind) pass over to the sky (or space); the dead body is carried by four persons, placing the body on a death-bed. The particulars of the dead are known upto the cremation-ground; the bones become (in colour) like the feathers of a pigeon; oblations end with the ashes; donations (for the dead) are offered by the stupid; whoever advocate the existence of other world (atthika-vāda) speak false; for the stupid and

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learned are annihilated after death; they do not exist after death. (*Digha* I. 2).

The above theory of materialism corresponds to that of the Cārvāka, Lokāyata, or Nāstika mentioned in the Oriental philosophies. Philosophically the theory is better known as that of identifying the body with the soul (dehātmavāda) denounced by almost all the philosophers of the Orient. Their main attack is directed against the inconsistent corollary of 'the destruction of what is done (krita-nāśa) and the advent of what is not done (akrita-āgama)', if the said materialism is accepted.

But in the Master's system of meditation, it is not necessary to accept any doctrine whatsoever appearing new or foreign to a practiser and renounce what he has adhered to as his pet doctrine, as is evident from what he offered to the three thousand ascetics headed by Nyagrodha. It was in the ascetic rest-house of Udumbarikā in Rājagha. Among other things, the Master said towards the end of the discourse to Nyagrodha and the large assembly of ascetics headed by him as follows:

I, however, Nyagrodha! say thus: 'Let an intelligent person, who be good, undeceitful, and honest, come to me, I shall preach the dhamma (to him) . . . he will have realized it in this very life practising for seven, six, five, four, three, two, one year, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one month, half a month; let alone, Nyagrodha! half a month, for even a week.' You might think, Nyagrodha! like this: 'Samaṇa Gotama is telling us this in order to increase his disciples.' It is not to be thought so; whoever be your teacher (at present), let the same be your teacher . . . Whatever be your objective, let the same be your objective . . . Whatever be your means of livelihood, let the same be your means of livelihood . . . Whatever bad or good things be in the doctrine of your teachers and yours, let the same be in the doctrine of your teachers and yours . . . I shall preach the dhamma . . . he will have realized it even in a week. (*Dīgha* III. 2 Udumbarika sutta).

A view, theory or idea grasped and adhered to for long is very difficult to be removed easily. It is for this reason that the

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first of the eightfold path, sammā-diṭṭhi, or right view, is regarded as the first stage of the Buddha's system of Liberation. Hence we have been encouraged by the Master in the sutta quoted above to practise his device without bothering about the subtleties of the relative doctrine. For these subtleties demand close study of the *Abhidhamma*. And by the time we have completed such a study, we shall have lost the zeal for conducting the practical side of the device.

Let us not forget that in yoga it is the practice that counts, not the doctrine. The knowledge of the relative doctrine is useful to understand what we achieve. And without such an achievement, the knowledge alone will never give us any satisfaction whatsoever. Doubt (vicikicchā) of course arises as an impediment (nivaraṇa) to the basic trance which is fundamental to the organization of any item of supenormal power or knowledge in the Master's system. The Master himself had found it, before his Enlightenment, to be disturbing.

The Master says that the doubt in the process of the gradual trance is a sort of mental defilement; for it leads us to a confusion of doubts which are never solved. So it is to be ignored whenever it arises. For example, doubt may arise whether there is total annihilation after death. Both ways, doubt may crop up; doubt itself cannot solve this problem; it would be therefore better to remove this doubt and meditate without it. The experience of the Bodhisattva is certainly a guidance for us in this field. He does not ask us to believe a doctrine without weighing its pros and cons.

So in the Apaṇṇaka sutta (*Majjhima* II 10), the Master says to the Brāhmaṇa householders of Sālā, a Brāhmaṇa village in Kosala:

> Is there any pleasurable teacher, House-holders! of yours, in whom you have obtained a faith (saddhā) born of cause?' 'Nay, Bhante, we have no teacher in whom we have a faith born of cause.' 'In that case, House-holders! when you have obtained no pleasurable teacher, you should adopt this Apaṇṇaka dhamma well.

From the text this Apaṇṇaka dhamma amounts to an attitude

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of adopting a profitable view among other conflicting and unprofitable ones advocated and propounded by the then teachers. The commentary, however, explains the word 'apaṇṇaka' to mean 'unfailing, unambiguous, determinate'. It is not however free-thinking in a wide sense. Before the Enlightenment, the Bodhisattva was in a sense a free-thinker; but after the Enlightenment, we cannot possibly expect him to be a free-thinker.

Accordingly, the Buddhist outlook on supplying a common-sense proof for the supernormal dhammas is principally based on the Master's experience as found in the *Tipiṭaka*. The Master did not as a rule tell the audience the things not generally believable. In the fourth rule of excommunication (pārājika), towards the end of this description (*Vinaya* III. 1.4) we find the Elder Moggallāna telling the monks some strange experiences realized by him. He was not believed. The Master said, when informed of this, that he also had seen them. He did not tell them lest others should not believe them and thereby earn harmful demerit.

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IV

Practice of Abhibhayatana

Practice of Unpractised Device

WE HAVE fully dealt with colour kasiṇa in Chapters V to IX of the sixth Phase of this research. That was because the colour kasiṇa promised a ready access to the main thesis of the sixth Phase, viz., the knowledge of mind-to-mind grasp and that of the past remembrance of one's own fromer lives. The colour of heart-blood was said to be the first step to grasp the mind-to-mind knowledge in both the works of our two savants, Buddhaghosa and Upatissa. And the colour is possibly a help in detecting the scenes of past lives.

Kasiṇa practice has occupied a prominent place in the Pāli commentaries of the text. Naturally Buddhaghosa has given it great importance in his work. The importance of kasiṇa seems to have been lost later on probably due to its artificial device. Such an artificial device as the kasiṇa practice demanded was perhaps regarded, in later days, as unworthy of or less respectful for monks ordained in the most respectable Order. There might have been also several causes other than this. Nevertheless the kasiṇa practice could have been practically revived in the original practice of abhibhāyatana.

To the intellectuals, the philosophical speculation looks honourable; but it is a luxury as compared to a yogic practice or even to an intuitive deliberation in the field of vipassanā.

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A yogic practice in the Master's system requires a sort of mental set-up capable of gradual escalation. This escalation is brought about through speechless and a[ert meditation. A speechless meditation does not mean a state of quietude, nor a state of quietism; it is always a state of alertness or memory (sati); memory is the key to Buddhistic meditation; without it, one would not be able to detect and transcend the successive states of trance or intuition.

For no trance of samādhi is final in this system; the ninth trance of cessation of feeling and consciousness is final only in the sense that it is the culmination of the gradual trances; if it were final in every sense, then the Master would have recommended it to be organized for much longer a period than that of seven days. We do not find a single instance in the *Tipiṭaka* when any monk or nun had organized it for more than seven days at a stretch.

The period of seven days for this trance is found to be the maximum even in the case of former Buddhas. The reason for limiting it to this maximal period is not given in the text nor in the commentaries. The limit is not textually set to this period, but it is tacitly implied and understood. The state of Liberation as the fruit of the fourth stage is, however, maintained throughout the rest of one's life. This shows that the Master's system of meditation is oriented to Nibbāna from the beginning to the very end.

From such an overall view or objective of the system, we can understand why the Master taught the device of the socalled Abhibhayātana. Buddhaghosa was so much enamoured of the artificial kasiṇa that he did not even think it worthwhile to give a short description of this original device. In the miscellany section of the fifth chapter of his work, *Visuddi-magga*, he merely mentions the Abhibhāyatana among the things gained through the practice of kasiṇas such as earth, blue, yellow, and red colour kasiṇas.

The commentator, Dhammapāla, also has nothing to comment on this device. The commentary of the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, Aṭṭhasālini, gives us some idea about this (III. Abhibhayātana-kathā, paras 390-394). Similarly, we can get

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some ideas of this from the commentaries of the first two *Nikāyas*, *Dīgha* (II. 3 Mahāparinibbāna sutta), *Majjhima* (II. 27 Mahāsakula-udāyi sutta). So, in spite of the *Visuddhi-magga's* silence on this topic, we can make out something of this important contrivance from these commentaries.

The silence of our savant in his work evidently means that this original device had gone out of practice in the tradition our savant represents. Another savant, Upatissa, also gives us nothing in his work. He is content with a mere mention of the 'Miscellaneous Teachings' (*Vimutti-magga*, p. 130). It was so evidently due to the currency of kasiṇa in the time of our savants. But we have reasons to believe that the practice of Abhibhāyatana must have been widely prevalent in the time of the Master.

The modern savant, the late Dharmānanda Kosāmbi, has expressed a like opinion in his treatise *Samādhi Mārga* in the Gujarati language. His opinion seemed very reasonable to me. Still I cannot express a definite opinion about what he says. My contention was only this that the Bodhisattva could never be imagined to have practised the artificial form of kasiṇa. Be that as it may, we shall have to bring the practice of this device before the would-be yogin or novice for his due consideration.

Examination of our Opinion about this Device

We shall have to examine our own opinion, if we are to be sure of this device of Abhibhāyatana. We shall at first see what Dharmānanda Kosāmbi in his said little book has to say about it. In the Preface (prastāvanā) to his book, he says:

> By the help of 'Abhibhvāyatana' (Abhibhāyatana in Pāli) the Budhda Bhagavān himself has spread the method of meditating on the beauty of creation and introduced the variety in the Path of Samādhi...The method of meditating through 'Abhibhāyatana' on the beauty of creation has not gained much importance in the countries (of the Occident). (pp. 3-4).

Nevertheless we cannot agree with him on the aesthetic view of this method; for the Master is ever known to have taught

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his disciples to cultivate a disposition of non-attachment to worldly pleasures. The support of the device is certainly the fresh flowers and colours of nature, but these are not to be realised as pleasurable in conformity with the Master's teaching. The savant has, however, considered the topic well in the seventh section of his book:

> In the time (of the *Dīgha* and *Aṅguttara Nikāyas*), it appears that this Āyatana (support, device) was counted as very important. The compiler of the Dhammasaṅgaṇi (the first book of the *Abhidhamma*) has stated the Kasiṇa first, but has not left out these eight Āyatanas. Immediately after the Kasiṇas these are stated. But in the time of Buddhaghosa-ācārya, these Āyatanas seem to have been left behind, and the Kasiṇas seem to have come forward.

The Dhamma-saṅgaṇi really takes up the kasiṇa first (I.I. 2 Rūpāvacara Kusala) in detail; but immediately after it, the abhibhāyatana is dealt with in similar detail. The importance of the kasiṇa seems to have been risen much more than that of the abhibhāyatana, as is evident from the different commentaries on the suttas. From the text of the *Abhidhamma* mentioned above, controversial topic of the artificial disk of kasiṇa is scarcely possible to be derived.

The above-mentioned commentary in the said section (para 338) explains the kasiṇa as follows:

> Paṭhavi kasiṇa—herein the earth-maṇḍala (globe) in the meaning of its entirety is also called the 'Paṭhavi-kasiṇa', also the sign obtained thereon, also the Jhāna (trance) obtained on the sign. In this meaning the Jhāna is to be understood as the Paṭhavi-kasiṇa. The yogin having organized the Jhāna named Paṭhavi-kasiṇa dwells therein—this is herein the short meaning.

But the commentary further on (para 381) explains the words 'paritta-ārammana' (small support) as "the support not increased (as large) as only a 'suppa' (a flat shallow basket used for winnowing grains) or a 'sarāva' (saucer)". And these two words

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are exactly used by Buddhaghosa in his work for describing the size of the artificial disk for kasiṇa practice. The term for the small support is invariably used in the sections of the kasiṇa, abhibhāyatana, and vimokkha.

The commentary further implies that the forms, seen in the practice of the abhibhāyatana and vimokkha, are those organized in the kasiṇa and brought about by it. The commentary at the end of these three sections (para 398) concludes:

> Whether it be the Kasina, or Abhibhāyatana, or Vimokkha, it is truly the trance of Form category (rūpāvacara). In the sense of the support (ārammana), it is called Kasiṇa; in the sense of overpowering the support it is called Abhibhāyatana: in the sense of confidently residing in the support and also in that of being released from the adverse dhammas, it is called Vimokkha.

The commentary continues: "Therein the teaching of Kasiṇa is given in the manner of *Abhidhamma*; and that of the others (abhibhāyatana and vimokkha) is to be understood (as given) in the manner of Suttanta (Sutta-piṭaka)". And we may add further to this that the artificial disk or equivalent of kasiṇa is found in the *Visuddhimagga* (VI and V). What is more than this? The commentary at the end of the first jhāna (I. I. 3 para 339) says:

> This is the short description herein. The detail should be learnt as described in the *Visuddhimagga*. As it is here, so is it in others also. The method of contemplation for all Kammaṭṭhānas, taken all in the manner of the commentary (Aṭṭhakathā), is detailed in the *Visuddhimagga*...

Consequently, it is difficult to refute what the Elder Budhaghosa writes in his said work. We have brought before the reader the critical opinion of Dhammānanda Kosambi who is a well-known scholar of the *Visuddhi-magga*. He says further in the same book (page 97):

> After the establishment of the Buddhistic Religion, there was

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> no monastic residential house (vihāra) for the monks. They used to dwell in some huts made in groves or forests...In them the monks only lived for four months of the rainy season. They passed the remaining eight months outside in wan dering and preaching the dhamma. During this time there could not have come into existence the artificial kasiṇa described in the *Visuddhimagga*.

This is a definite opinion probably ever pronounced on this topic.

He continues:

> During the excavation of the ancient Buddhistic monasteries, some round stone kasiṇas have been found. This shows that the method of operating the artificial kasiṇa came into existence after the time of Asoka. Before this, the monks should have been conducting the contemplation on the Abhibhāyatana...

This is my free translation of the Gujarati passages given in his said book. The find of such stone kasiṇas has also been recorded in the Pāli Text Society's Pāli-English Dictionary, under the word 'Kasiṇa' on page 201 as follows:

Kasiṇa ... "—maṇḍala a board or stone or piece of ground divided by depresssion to be used as a mechanical aid to jhāna exercise. In each division of the maṇḍala a sample of a kasiṇa was put. Several of these stone maṇḍalas have been found in the ruins at Anurādhapura." (PTS PED 1966, p. 201).

Anurādhapura lies to the northern part of the country in Sri Lanka. These finds are certainly valuable. They show the existence of kasiṇa practices in the Buddhist monasteries. If we put the artificial kasiṇa design aside, there will appear no great difference between the kasiṇa and the abhibhāyatana and also the first three items of the vimokkha. But the benefit of the artificial kasiṇa cannot be easily overlooked, which we have fully dealt with in the sixth phase of this research.

Nevertheless we should not let the abhibhāyatana remain in obscurity any longer; for its revival may provide us with the natural support in the shape of fresh flowers, colours, green

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hill sides, great expanses of forest, fields, lakes, rivers, clear blue sky, etc. for meditation, as originally taught by the Master in these three unique methods of natural support for meditation. These are the kasiṇa, abhibhāyatana, and vimokkah's first three items.

Out of three methods, the abhibhāyatana is probably the easiest and clearest to be comprehended and practised. This practice may be very helpful in organizing the device of the main thesis of this Phase also. The device for organizing some supernormal phenomena needs a sort of trance stabilized to serve for the foundation trance which could be channelled in some desired direction. The natural support might appeal to our modern temperament and tendency to look at natural things and for natural laws in nature itself. The abhibhāyatana appears to be just this sort of device we may like to adopt.

We should never forget that the Master's experience is a great asset for our inexperienced endeavour in the field of supernormal power and knowledge. Any and every practice cannot lead us to a pure and blameless termination of human aspiration. And the Master's experience is certainly a great guide to warn us at least of dangerous pitfalls. If we suffer ourselves to be led by it, it may not disappoint us in the end. We have nothing to lose in such an enterprise as is stated above.

Moreover, whatever we do should have moral value or content. If we do not accept any control of morality in our yogic activities endeavour may lead us even towards moral degradation. There are possibly no greater moralists to guide us in the world than Buddha Gautama during these twentysix centuries. It is the Buddha himself who has established the practice of supernormal powers and knowledge strictly on morality. It will thus give us the highest moral sense in this little-known field, if we follow his guidance, even if we may not commit ourselves to the religion ascribed to his teaching. There is, however, no bar or barrier to our paying to him our highest regard and reverence out of our appreciation of his system of meditation.

Natural Support of Abbibhayatana

Soon after the Great Enlightenment, the Buddha thought of preaching the dhamma discovered by him to the group of five

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disciples residing then in the deer park of Isipatana near Banaras. It is said that he met a naked ascetic, Upaka by name, on his way to Banaras between the Bodhi-seat and Gaya. Upaka accosted him and enquired if he had a teacher; the meeting is fully described in the Mahāvagga (I. 6) and the *Lalitavistara* (XXVI). The answer of the Buddha was that he had no teacher.

The first two lines of the verse out of ten lines in Pāli are not found in the *Lalitavistara* which expounds the remaining eight lines of Pāli into twelve lines. The first stanza of the verse is however found in the *Dhammapada* (No. 353): the commentary thereon contains the story (Upaka-ājīvaka-vatthu). The first word of these lines is "Sabhābhibhū". Both the Pāli commentaries explain it as 'one who has overcome (Abhibhavana...) all...' This clearly shows that this device was fully organized and realized by the Buddha.

The name of this device implies that it overcomes (abhibhavati) all its objects. How is it to be organized so that the objects perceived in it are fully overcome, subdued, or overwhelmed? The device itself in the *Abhidhamma*, or its commentary does not give us any help in this direction; we may nonetheless derive the missing portion from the circumstantial evidence available in the suttas. It will be our endeavour to do so in this chapter.

We have these eight items of abhibhāyatana in the *Dīgha*, *Majjhima*, and *Aṅguttara Nikāyas*; the descriptions of these āyatanas are mostly identical. The sequence of kasiṇa and abhibhāyatana is, however, different and not always the same. For example, *Aṅguttara* (I. 18. 46 to 53 suttas) gives the sequence as abhibhāyatana, vimokkha, and kasiṇa; *Aṅguttara* (X. 3. 9 sutta) has kasiṇa and abhibhāyatana, while vimokkha is missing; *Aṅguttara* again (VIII. 7. suttas 5 and 6; Viii. 11 Rāga Peyyāla) gives us abhibhāyatana and vimokkha only, while kasiṇa is not mentioned.

Similarly in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta (*Dīgha* II. 3), we have abhibhāyatana and vimokkha, while kasiṇa is not given. It is only in the enumerative two suttas, Saṅgīti and Dasuttara (*Dīgha* III. 10 and 11) that we naturally get eight abhibhāyatanas, eight vimokkhas, and ten kasiṇas in order. In the Mahāsakula-udāyi

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sutta (*Majjhima* II. 27), we find the reverse order as vimokkha. then abhibhāyatana, and only thereafter kasiṇa.

Moreover, wherever the three devices are given, the ten kasiṇas are briefly mentioned by name, while the other two devices are described in full. This is very significant. This shows, to all appearances, a reasonable conclusion that these three devices were taught as independent devices, while some significant emphasis or importance was given to the two devices, abhibhāyatana and vimokkha.

This is evidently because the support of abhibhāyatana is natural objects, colours, and flowers, while the first three items of vimokkha are mostly like the abhibhāyatana. The kasiṇa, on the other hand, would require the unvariegated large expanse of elements and colours for its support, not easily available ordinarily. It might have been the reason why the artificial disk and equivalent were adopted for kasiṇa practice. We cannot definitely say when this sort of adoption took place; but it must have taken place about the compilation of the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, wherein the kasiṇa is systematized with the four and five jhānas.

Therein the Paṭhavi kasiṇa (earth sign) has been regularly employed in the four or five form trances. Like the Paṭhavi kasiṇa, other three elements, water, fire, and air kasiṇas are also mentioned. Similarly the four colour kasinas are also made each a base for the form trance. This means that the form trance is to be produced on the support of the kasiṇa; but it is not clear whether or not the artificial or natural kasiṇa was used for this purpose.

Immediately after kasiṇa, abhibhāyatana is taken up in like manner with the form trance. This clearly shows that the form trance arises on the kasiṇa as much as on the abhibhāyatana. Even if the artificial kasiṇa might have been meant in the former, the latter was thought as efficient as the former. So in the eyes of the *Abhidhamma*, both these methods carry equal weight and importance. Evidently the opinion of the commentary of the Dhammasaṅgaṇi may be overlooked when it says: "Therein the teaching of kasiṇa is in the manner of the abhidhamma; while the other two (abhibhāyatana and vimokkha) are to be

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understood as told in the manner of the Suttanta teaching." With the text in evidence, we may overlook the commentary.

The Dhammasaṅgaṇi, the first book of *Abhidhamma* then takes up the first three items of the vimokkha and likewise joins them with the form trance. The remaining five items of the vimokkha are similar to the formless trance. Thereafter the four Brahmavihāras, ten disagreeable supports, and (according to the same commentary) ānāpāna and memory on the physical body (kāya) are also similarly treated of with the appropriate stages of the form trance. The said commentary at the end (para 426) says:

"These (enumerated above) are all told here as the Appanā (trance) of the form category (rūpāvacara)." We are to mark here the fact that the form trance is organizable on a variety of supports. It is also to be noticed here that the form trance can be organized even with any gross, subtle, or indeterminate support, so to say, that is, naturally and automatically, the method of which we have fully dealt with in the first Phase of this research. By the way, this natural method was what Prince Siddhārtha knowingly or unknowingly employed in his very first trance obtained by him beneath the rose-apple tree on his father's farm (Pitu Sakkassa kammante, *Majjhima* I. 36).

Knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly, our mind arises on one or the other support. On this, the said commentary (on the Dhammasaṅgaṇi) in the Vipāka-uddhāra-kathā (III. para 614) says definitely:

> Even without Āvajjana (adverting) the mind arises, but without Ārammana (support) the mind does not arise. If so, what is its support? Any one of the Paritta (limited or belonging to the material world) dhammas, such as Rūpa, etc. Out of these (supports) whichever comes at that time (as a stimulus) before it (āpāthagata), this mind (under discussion) arises on it, thus it is to be understood.

This mind is morally neutral, accompanied by neutral feeling (upekkhā-sahagata), and rootless (ahetuka). Like the passive unconscious (Bhavaṅga) mind, it has no need of adverting (āvajjana-kicca) for its arising...(ibid.). This mind in its func-

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tional aspect has been highly eulogized in the same commentary (III para 663) as follows:—

> This mind (as defined above) is common to all the conscious (sacittaka) beings (sattā) in (all) the three spheres of existence (bhavas). It cannot be said that it does not arise in any conscious being. When it arises, it becomes the (functional mind of) determining (of percepts brought about) through the five-(sense) door; in the mind-door (it becomes) the adverting. The six extra-ordinary knowledges also grasp the support grasped by this (mind) alone. This mind is called the 'Great Elephant' (mahāgaja). There is no support that is not its support (that is, it grasps all supports). What is the non-omiscience knowledge that behaves as the omniscience one? If it be asked, then (the answer would be that) it is this.

The above statement shows the unique stand of Buddhism with regard to the universal law of its psychology. It is to be marked that this mind is not a result (vipāka) of our past action; it is only functional (kiriya) and common to all of us. It is present wherever the mind would be present; so it is universal. Due to the presence of this mind, we can hope to gain the supernormal knowledge; for the adverting and determining will be necessary in organizing any branch of knowledge, normal or supernormal; and the adverting and determining function is possible only through this functional mind.

From what we have displayed so far, the natural support of the abhibhāyatana practice would seem quite amenable to mental operation or manipulation. Nevertheless it would lack the uniformity or homogeneity of the kasiṇa practice. So the real test of these two practices will depend on our own experiment and experience. Buddhaghosa is definitely in favour of the kasiṇa practice. And we have seen that the sutta favours the abhibhāyatana and vimokkha practices, while the *Abhidhamma* seems to be equally in favour of both the practices.

If the artificial disk and equivalent were only a later development, the commentatorial literature must have meant it also in ascribing the kasiṇa so widely to most of the achievements in

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trance, absorption, and supernormal power. The *Abhidhamma* has also analysed the first four items of the abhibhāyatana of the sutta and then enlarged them into its own items. The words initiating the first two items as "ajjhattam rūpasaññi" in the sutta have been changed into "ajjhattam arūpasaññi"; the commentary upholds this change on the plea given below.

"(Why were the words changed?) It was because one's own shape (rūpa) etc. cannot be overcome. Whether therein (in the sutta) or herein (in the Dhammasaṅgaṇi), only the external shapes are to be overcome..." It is true, but the text in the sutta was admittedly changed in the *Abhidhamma* nonetheless. We have also shown above how the *Abhidhamma* has analysed and enlarged the text of the sutta in it. This sort of manipulation in the *Abhidhamma* proves the authenticity of the text of the sutta to be older than that of the *Abhidhamma*.

The detailed treatment of abhibhāyatana in the *Abhidhamma* would show that this device was certainly taught by the Master more preferably than that of kasiṇa. But our savant in the *Visuddhi-magga* has obviously ignored it in preference to kasiṇa. Another later savant, Anuruddha-ācariya by name, has strangely enough, totally missed to mention abhibhāyatana in his well known treatise the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*.

Nevertheless, we shall try to bring this neglected device of outstanding value before the would-be yogins or novices in the succeeding chapter. The Master's device of yoga should never be missed by us. It is possible that some devices might come to be appropriate to our modern need, taste, and condition. There are eight items of this device, the latter four items of which are about the same as the four colour kasiṇas. The first four items do not resemble the four elemental kasiṇas, as might be erroneously supposed. This device takes more things into consideration than kasiṇa does. Besides, this introduces the idea of overcoming the support.

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V

Organization of Device of Abhibhāyatana

Formula of Organizing First Abhibhayatana

"Perceiving oneself (as an individual) with shape and form, one sees the external shapes and forms (which are) limited, pretty and ugly. Overcoming these, one perceives thus: 'I know, I see (these)'. This is the first Abhibhāyatana." This formula was told to Ānanda in the relic shrine of Capala in Vesāli in the last year of the Master (*Dīgha* II. 3). This same formula was told to Sakula Udāyi, the wanderer, in Rājagaha (*Majjhima* II. 27). This same formula was preached to the congregation of monks (*Aṅguttara* I. 18. 46 to 53 suttas; VIII. 7.5 sutta; X. 3. 9-5 sutta).

The commentary on the *Dīgha* explains this formula as follows:—

> Abhibhāyatana means the cause of overcoming. What do these overcome? The adverse dhammas also and the supports also (are overcome). For they overcome the adverse dhammas through the opposing nature, and the supports through the (practising) individual's higher knowledge. 'Perceiving oneself with shape and form' (ajjhattam rūpasaññi) means...one becomes so by preliminary work in one's own (body).

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The above explanation of a part of the formula implies that this device overcomes the impediments to meditation and also overpowers the supports or objects of meditation themselves. The latter benefit is worth consideration. For it often happens in meditation that we become the subdued, the overwhelmed, and the lost by and in it. Memory (sati) is very helpful in meditation; it helps us to be aware of every thing; but it does not keep us from being subdued, overwhelmed, or possessed. Hence this device is unique in this aspect. This idea is found in a way in the Parihānadhamma sutta (Samyutta IV. 35. 95) as follows in brief:

> Here, monks! seeing the object with the eyes, immoral ideas arise...to monks. If the monk accepts them, does not renounce them. ., he should know: 'I lose the good dhammas'...Tasting...(etc.) Knowing mental dhammas with the mind, immoral ideas arise...to monks. If the monk accepts them, does not renounce them..., he should know: 'I lose the good dhammas'...Here monks! if seeing the objects with eyes, immoral ideas do not arise...then the monk should know: 'This support is overcome (abhibhūtam etam āyatanam). It is certainly the Abhibhāyatana told by the Blessed One.' If tasting...If knowing the mental dhammas...'This support is overcome (by me)'. It is certainly the Abhibhāyatana told by the Blessed One.

Although the above sutta takes up the six senses including the mind instead of the regular eight items of the abhibhāyatana, the meaning and purport of this device is clear and unequivocal. This shows the way to overcome the support or object of perception or conception, and thereby of meditation. Not only the objects of meditation, but the phenomena appearing in it also are needed to be subdued. For sometimes fearful apparitions appear before the eyes of the meditationist. Buddhaghosa amply warns him against these.

In the second chapter of the *Visuddhi-magga* on the dhutaṅga of resorting to the cremation-ground, Buddhaghosa warns thus: "Non-human (ghost-like) beings who might be crying and roaming about should not be hit with anything..." This looks

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mere superstition; but those who have been haunted by such apparitions in such grounds, while alone, speak of horror increasing every moment; apparitions may be imaginary, while horror is real.

In the sixth chapter on the ten disagreeable contemplation of the same work, he says:

> For learning the sign (of the swollen dead body), when the yogin opening the eyes looks at it, immediately the sign appears to him as if the dead body turned and stood up, as if it moved on and followed him. Seeing that awful and horrible object, he becomes demented and like a madman. And he gets stupefied, terror-stricken, and with hairs standing erect...

The movement of a dead body appears to happen out of fear, but the horror is actual.

In the 13th chapter of the same book on the knowledge of cutūpapāta (the main subject of this Phase), he says:

> It (supernormal sight) however becomes the hindrance of an outsider yogin. Why so? For when he resolves the light to spread wherever he desires, the light becomes one complete (extensive) field (ekāloka), piercing those places in the earth, sea, and mountain. Then on seeing the terrible shapes and forms of Yakkha, Rakkhasa, etc., fear arises. This fear causes the mind to be disturbed and thereby he becomes possessed of meditational mania. Hence one should be non-negligent in seeing the visible phenomena (Rūpadassana). (*Visuddhi-magga* XIII, para 100.)

The Bhaya-bherava sutta (*Majjhima* I. 4) tells us how this sort of fear is to be removed as soon as it arises. But the method of abhibhāyatana is the masterful practice not only in subduing all sorts of fear, but also the hindrances to meditation. The very name of this device is indicative of what we can expect to gain from this practice. But unlike the above sutta, this device does not tell us how to subdue the very support of meditation. The

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commentary gives us a simile to explain it, which is quite inappropriate in the context.

Now to resume the commentary on this device under discussion (*Dīgha* II. 3; *Majjhima* II. 27), it continues:

> One sees the external shapes and forms (rupani) means one whose individual shape made by the preliminary work arises (so internally), while the sign (arises or appears) externally, is called, on account of the internal preliminary work and the external appanā (absorption), the perceiver of oneself with shape sees the external shapes.

This practically means: 'one as an individual internally sees the external objects around oneself.' It is merely a commonplace statement. Then why is it that the commentary takes so much trouble to do so?

Buddhism proceeds from the common to the specific, the ordinary to the extraordinary, the normal to the supernormal, and the mundane to the supramundane. We as individuals see things outside; the visible things are pretty and ugly; we are drawn towards these, or repelled therefrom, or indifferent to them. The relative text teaches us to overcome such mental concomitants. If we could pass sufficient time upon this mood, the *Abhidhamma* assures us that this state would assume gradually a form trance with our overpowering of the objective support.

The commentary with its probable kasiṇa-complex explains the limited (objects) as 'not increased'; for the percept of the limited sign of kasiṇa is taught the novice to increase. The commentary is, however, apparently unable to explain the textual words 'pretty and ugly' except as 'these are either pretty or ugly'. The Master's intention is clearly the surrounding objects as we have stated above; for every object we see around us is limited and the commentary rightly says:

"This Abhibhāyatana should be understood as told by way of the limited (paritta)." To all appearances, the commentary uses an inappropriate simile to explain the sense of 'overcoming or subduing'. Here again the kasiṇa-complex of the commentary is to blame. The simile not found in the text is as follows:

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As a person with good digestion getting only a spoonful of rice says: 'What is here to be eaten? So saying, he gathers (the rice served) and makes it only a single mouthful. In the same manner, a person with higher knowledge and thereby well-versed says: 'What is here in this limited support to be organized? It is not difficult for me.' So saying and subduing these shapes, he organizes it and, forthwith with the production of the sign, brings about the appanā (state of samādhi); this is the meaning.

Obviously, the commentary does not satisfy us with what it has done. Probably the commentary takes the person to be one well practised in kasiṇa before this device.

Another question is that of 'abhoga,' a psychological term meaning the mental grasp of samādhic experience. The commentary says: "I know, I see, (the text) tells thereby the Abhoga. This is verily (the pronouncement) of the person after his coming down from the samādhi, not within the (period of) samādhi." But the commentary of the *Abhidhamma* (I. 3 para 390) says: "I know, I see, (the text) tells thereby the previous Ābhoga (that is, before entering into the state of samādhi)." But in the commentaries of the Āgama (*Nikāya*), it is said: "The Abhoga is told thereby. This is surely of one (yogin) coming down from the samādhi, not within the samādhi," as we have quoted above.

Why is it that the commentary is so much concerned with the abhoga not to be mixed up with the experience of the samādhi proper? It is evidently because the flow of samādhic moments (appanā) cannot entertain another dissimilar mental moment. Any dissimilar mental moment would disturb the flow of samādhic moments and make it intermittent. One of the important points, not mentioned explicitly in the *Abhidhamma* commentary, has been clarified in the suttanta commentaries.

'Evam-saññi hoti' (one who perceives thus)—that is, with the overcoming perception also and with the jhānic perception one becomes such a perceiver. The perception of Abhibhāvana (overcoming) is present even during the (period of)

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samādhi; the percept of (it) Ābhoga however (comes in) after coming down from the samādhi.

This is because the overcoming factor is integral to the samādhi of this category itself and therefore present within the samādhi (antosamāpattiyam). The *Abhidhamma* commentary would necessarily imply it.

But the main question yet remains to be answered. How should we organize this device of overcoming the support along with the organization of samādhi? Neither the text nor the commentary helps us in this matter. The manipulation of the perception of the artificial kasiṇa sign might give us a little guidance. But we shall have to derive it from the text of the regular form trance. We have already seen how the simile for overcoming given in the commentary falls far apart from our conception of overcoming the support.

The word 'abhibhavana' nowhere in its different forms and moods of the grammar implies the sense exemplified in the said simile. It is used in the active sense as overcoming and in the passive sense as being overcome. In the Khagga-visāna sutta (Verse 11) of the Culla-Niddesa, 'Abhibhuyya' (past participle form of abhibhavana) is explained as 'having overcome, overflooded, overpowered, and crushed.' In the *Lalitavistara* (XXI. verse 156), the Mara is denounced as "abhibhaviṣyase" (future passive) meaning 'thou shalt be overcome'.

In the *Yogasūtra* (III. 9 sūtra), the textual word 'abhibhava' is however explained as 'the state of incapability in doing any work because of humiliation' in the passive sense (by Bhojadev or Bhojarāja). Bhāvāgaṇeśa simply explains it as 'hrāsa (or decrease)'; Vijñāna Bhikṣu significantly explains it as 'gradual decrease but not (total) destruction'.

The discussion on this word above definitely shows that it means 'overcoming'. In the first and the rest of the abhibhāyatana, the yogin is taught to overcome or subdue the support of meditation. In other words, the yogin, in the first stage of this device, has to overpower the surrounding objects. At its best, the simile of the commentary might have been given to show that the practice of this device makes it much easier to obtain the appanā quickly through subduing the impediments to samādhi.

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Tentative Method of Subduing Supports

When we find any explicit method neither in the text nor in the commentary, we have to find its allied one or ones. In the ānāpāna device, we let the respirations come in and go out as they please; we keep each of their movements in memory; we do not control them, nor restrain the breath. The retention of breath would not mean its subduing, for it would be forced. In the fourth stage of trance, it is said that the breath automatically stops.

In the observation of the body, we observe each of its parts as separate from one another. The purpose is to see clearly that these separate parts make up the whole, with which we feel ourselves identified. This is an error of collective judgement without analysis. The subduing of these parts might mean non-attachment towards them; this is only a partial side of abhibhāyatana.

In the observation of feeling, we observe the arising and the passing off of the different shades of feeling. The purpose is to destroy the conception of feeling identified with our ego of self. The subduing herein also might mean non-attachment to feeling. But it is difficult to do so ordinarily; for feeling is intimately connected with our inner identity; we feel as if we are the feeling; constant observation would remove the false identity of ourselves. These are the two principal practices highly eulogized in the Sati-Paṭṭhāna sutta or the cultivation of memory.

In the observation of mind, every fluctuation on the mental field is marked by the mind itself. This observation is apparently difficult; for mind is to be watched with mind; but with a little practice, this exercise becomes interesting. Moreover this observation makes one aware of what one is like every moment. The subduing of such a mind is difficult to define. The Master however includes it in the abhibhāyatana of the six senses in the Parihāna-dhamma sutta (*Samyutta* IV. 35. 96) described in the preceding section.

The observation of dhammas is conducted on a still subtler level. The disposition of the mind is not only watched every moment, but how each dhamma arises and sets in it is also to be learnt and made use of. These four observations have been

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fully dealt with in Chapters VII to XI of the second Phase of this research. The subduing of immoral dhammas certainly means their elimination, whereas morally beneficial dhammas are retained and developed.

In the organization of the form trance fully described in the first phase of this research, the impediments to trance, the five nivāranas, have to be subdued one by one. The methods of doing so are several; but the organization of trance itself gradually diminishes the impediments one by one. There is, however, some difference between the organization of the form trance and that of abhibhāyatana. This is as follows:

In a form trance, the surrounding objects are not directly viewed or observed; these are, so to say, not really made the support of the trance. These objects present themselves before the eyes as stimuli; the mind does not advert to them actively or consciously. The mind gradually loses the conception of their materiality; then the surrounding objects appear as mere shapes and forms; the visible objects would be felt as mere visual perception; the perception of them would make up a pattern.

In the artificial kasiṇa practice, the kasiṇa design is directly and intentionally viewed; the sign is learnt and later on recalled; the ultimate purpose of kasiṇa practice is to obtain the counterpart sign on the after-image of the learnt sign. So kasiṇa practice is fundamentally different from the organization of the form trance. At any rate Buddhaghosa misses to describe the nature of form (rūpāvacara). In spite of his elaborate description of the kasiṇa design, its after-image, and the counterpart sign arising suddenly therefrom, he fails to state how the form, that is, the nature of rūpāvacara, is felt, perceived, or experienced. This topic is also discussed in the first Phase of this research. I have done my best therein to explain the nature, perception, and experience of form (rūpāvacara).

In the first and the rest of the abhibhāyatana, it appears, from what we know of the Master's method, that the surrounding objects are only seen, but not learnt; these are not later on recalled, as in the kasiṇa practice. We do not get an impression of any elaborate preparation to be needed in this device. The objects are all around; there is nothing of artificiality in it; it

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is of course a selected place of nature; the visual perception, if dwelt on sufficiently long, will assume a form aspect. How to subdue it will still be a question unexplained in the sutta or its commentary.

If the form trance is dwelt on and developed, the first stage will develop into the second; the second into the third; the third into the fourth. Although it may seem to be automatic to us, Abhidhammic psychology says that each stage of the form trance is to be separately organized; it is true; for each of the four factors, viz., vitakka, vicāra, pīti, and sukha, is eliminated one by one; ultimately in the last stage only the state of upekkhā and concentration remains. But in spite of what is said therein, the stages of the form trance would seem to be developing, so to say, automatically to a yogin who dwells pretty long on or in the trance.

The Dhammasaṅgaṇi, the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, makes no difference between kasiṇa and this device; each item of kasiṇa and abhibhāyatana is joined with all the form trances; it means that either support is valid for all the stages of the form trance. This assures us of the thesis that we can regard this natural support as efficient as the artificial one of kasiṇa. In all fairness to Buddhaghosa, we should admit that the artificial kasiṇa sign can be increased as large as one desires, while the natural objects in this device cannot possibly be increased.

Nevertheless, the field of objects itsels may be initially selected as paritta (limited or small), or appamāna (larger field of greater coverage).

The commentary, however, explains the two technical terms as 'unincreased' and 'increased', respectively. But the context tends towards our interpretation given above within brackets more than what is found in the commentary.

It goes fully to the credit of the Master that the meditation on such natural objects leads us direct to the form state or sphere. Had he himself not experienced it, we might have regarded it as just a poetic fancy and nothing more than that. There is herein no conception of divinity, nor any chanting of mantra (spell), nor any conjuring up of any divine image. This

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could not have been invented without his real and actual experience. Rightly he has claimed its discovery. And rightly he had declared to the naked ascetic, Upaka, that he had subdued all and known all (sabba-abhibhū, Sabba-vidū aham asmi, *Dhammapada* verse 353).

The first two items of this device contain the initial phrase, 'ajjhattam rūpa-saññi', but the *Abhidhamma* makes it 'ajjhattam arūpa-saññi'; the commentary says that it is so because the 'internal rūpa' (one's gross or subtle body) cannot be subdued; so it is made 'arūpa' (without any conception of oneself). This is due to the kasiṇa-complex; for in the kasiṇa practice the individual shape of the practiser is not taken into consideration; so the individual therein is arūpa, that is, an individual who cares for no rūpa or material shape within or for himself, while contemplating the external sign before him. But this cannot be at least in the initial meditation.

Even for the sake of uniformity, the change should not have been made in the original text of the *Abhidhamma*, which claims to be exhaustive (nippariyāya desanā) in comparison to the sutta, which is, according to it, selective (pariyāya desāna). Obviously the elimination of the individual rūpa or shape of the meditationist cannot make the Abhidhammic text exhaustive (nippariyāya) in any sense. This would seem to be going beyond our limit. But the authenticity of original suttas will, to our common sense, override that of the *Abhidamma*.

The subduing of the support would, to all appearances, mean the imposition of meditative influence upon the support of meditation itself. This tentative method would entail a unique pressure meditatively upon the perception of objects presenting as stimuli in the abhibāyatana practice. Moreover, this unique pressure would make the contemplation more active and also save the latter from falling into passivity. As a rule, none of the trances or absorptions or samādhis in the Master's system is passive. For this reason, quietism does not fall in line with a single trance, absorption, or samādhi in this system. In samādhi, javana (active mental moment) is turned into appanā; because the former is invariably an active mental moment, so the latter must follow suit.

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This sort of self-confidence would be required in organizing the device of visualizing persons dying and being re-born in various states of existence, the main thesis of this Phase. A little diversion to the spiritualistic seances is introduced in the next chapter and its sections to exemplify the main topic.

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VI

Spirits

An Example of Spiritualistic Seance

EXORCISM FORMERLY practised to some extent in Nepal as elsewhere in the Orient has already gone out of practice now. It was primarily based on the belief that the ghost or spirit of the deceased person haunted his former house and his near relatives, especially when the death occurred violently, incidentally, unnaturally, or unexpectedly. The departed soul was said to be impatient to communicate his miserable state and to make his near relatives acquainted with it. There was some religious motive also in this. But most of the exorcists were little concerned with higher sentiments of religion. They were merely called in to make the spirit speak through some medium to be found among his (the deceased person's) own male relatives.

The method was primitive, suggestive, and, so to say, unorthodox. Such mediums spoke out; the wishes of the deceased were fulfilled; religious acts were performed; the haunts and their bad effects were stopped and ceased; the people thought that the spirit was appeased and also religiously despatched. The underlying belief remains, while the practice of exorcism has ceased. Since everyone could not be an exorcist and the medium was good only for the case in hand, the custom lost the interest of the people and consequently went out of vogue.

The exorcist himself acted as a conductor of the primitive

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seance or sitting generally known as 'bāyu bakāune' or 'making the unsettled spirit speak' through the mouth of the medium, who is selected from among the male relatives of the deceased person. The medium chosen is generally an early teenager. The relatives and neighbours gather in such a sitting, but it is conducted in private; for the near relatives do not like their secrets to be talked about. Although the medium is put under some suggestive influence of the exorcist during the period of the sitting, the medium does not seem to have suffered from any evil effect after it is over.

The exorcist is often some known primitive physician of the 'jhānkri' or occultist type; he does not become himself the medium; it is said that the spirit concerned prefers one of his own near relatives to use as the means of communication. None of the people present see anything except the activities of the exorcist and his medium. Really speaking, the exorcist does not seem to utter any mantra as in his other cures of occult nature. He uses all sorts of suggestive words addressed to the supposed spirit. There is ostensibly no fraud; questions are put by some of the relatives and answers are given by the medium, while the exorcist all the while encourages the unseen spirit to speak through the medium.

The little of the objective proof we have therein may be cited as the circumstances of death often given correctly. The outpourings of the spirit are often expressive of sorrows and sufferings endured by him after such death. The spirit also generally complains of the indifference of his relatives. He also makes himself responsible for an uncommon disease spread in the family; the purport is explained as only to remind the family of his death. The spirit is then lodged in a small corner of the yard or garden attached to the house of the relative, which is well cared for. After some time the spirit is carried away and ritually despatched to some sacred place.

This procedure was unorthodox; for there is a religious ceremony to be performed for an unnatural death of a person; but the religious performance has nothing to do with anything of exorcism; the ceremony itself is taken to be sufficient to better the condition of the deceased. Ordinary and natural deaths are never thought of as causing any trouble in the family.

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provided the usual religious ceremony and performance are completed in the name of the deceased.

About the beginning of this century, it appears that the news of modern spiritualistic seances spread to some extent also in Nepal. A few private seances appear to have been conducted in the matropolis with planchette. It is not known how far these were successful or satisfactory. But about four and a half decades before, with the visit of V.D. Rishi, the ex-judge of Baroda and Indian spiritualist of international fame, to the Terai, private seances in the area began with a table and a rolling board. In a certain western hilly corner of Nepal, these seances were experimented on a wider scale and achieved some success.

The table is made of a thin, light round plank, about two feet in diameter. The plank is made to stand on a central wooden round leg, about two and a half inches in diameter. The leg is fixed in a three-toed small foot-stand, so that the table is equally balanced when placed upon the ground. The height of the table is like that of common tables, so that the seance-holders, when seated on chairs round the table, might comfortably place both their hands on the board of the table. Generally four chairs are placed round the table and the sitters are asked to place both their p lms flatly and lightly on the plank.

The rolling board is also made of wood; it is rectangular with sides about eight inches in length and four inches in breath. In height it is about two inches in all with small ball-bearing bottom or foot on the four corners of this board. The purpose is to make the board roll freely forward and backward. A metal indicator is fixed in the middle of one edge of the board. A paper board, a little smaller in size than the surface of the plank of the table, is taken; on the topside of this paper board, all the letters of the alphabet are written in bold capitals, row after row, each letter within a separate small circle.

Below these letters, figures of numbers 1 to 9 and 0 are separately written, each within a small circle. On both top or middle corners, two words might be written, each word within a circle. The two words are 'Yes' and 'No'; 'Yes' on one side and 'No' on the other. This arrangement is made to make the

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answer short and quick. These letters and figures are to occupy not more than one third of the length of the paper board, so that enough space should remain for the rolling wooden board with the indicator to move freely forward and backward.

This detailed specification of the two appliances is given here to convey some idea of the simple means for the controversial communication with the departed persons. Here we do not require any exorcist to invoke the deceased; several persons take part in these two appliances; messages are certainly received; there is no mantra or spell used either to call the spirits or to ask them to depart. It is just as if we are inviting our unseen visitors to come in, have a talk for a while, and then depart with good will. There is no obligation on both sides.

Conduct of Spiritualistic Seance

A little diversion of an actual seance would be interesting to some readers and would to some extent facilitate the explanation of the device we are presenting in this phase of our research. It is to be noted that these seances are not samādhis, nor approaches to them; these are just some communications when both sides are willing; we do not see any of visiting spirits in any shape or form visible to us; nonetheless the disposition and mood in the seance make us believe, at least during the sitting, that there is some willingness to communicate from the other unseen side whatever it might be.

The round table is placed in about the middle of the room selected for conducting the seance for a couple of hours at one stretch. The room should be dimly lighted. The seance is not conducted in the open. Four chairs should be placed round the table. If there are more than four persons, they might be allowed to sit upon chairs placed in and behind the outer circle around the inner circle; but not more than four persons should be engaged in the actual conduct of the seance. There is of course no strict limit to the number of persons; this number might be increased to five or even six, if manageable in the limited space of the inner circle.

But the number of four persons should not be reduced to three or two; for the sitters experience some sort of pressure on the shoulders and within the head from the unknown

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presence real or supposed. This pressure is shared by the sitters of the inner circle. So the sitting should be generally conducted by four persons. A single person should never be conducting it. The presence of four persons at least is always safe. It is, however, only to give an idea of the sitting. This is not to be taken as a recommendation for conducting such a sitting.

When the sitters are well seated in the circle, they sit quietly for some time. Each one of the four persons puts both his palms lightly upon the surface of the round wooden board. There would be thus eight palms of their hands upon the table. The hands are to remain passive; their own force is not to be active at their hands. One of the sitters then conducts the sitting as follows:

He audibly and smoothly speaks as if addressing some unseen spirits in the empty space around the table: "Are here any spirits desirous of communicating with us? If such spirits be present here, please try to tilt this table slightly to one side." This speech is repeated four or five times. The result should follow soon. For spirits are often found desirous of communicating with us. The local spirits are usually the early visitors in such seances.

The table begins to tilt a little sooner or later. It is very rare to receive no response; we get it through the tilting of the table to one side; the unseen force of one or several spirits present there anyhow is supposed to exert it; the tilting of the table occurs through the passively put out hands of the sitters round the table. The force is even felt in their hands, and if marked well, even in their head. It is, however, very slight and not to get worried about; it does no harm; these spirits are not ghosts (with some airy sort of physical body).

In order to make communication possible through the tilting of the table, the conductor of the seance speaks audibly as before; "We cannot here your words. Please tilt the table one time, if you mean to say 'No'. Please tilt the table two times, if you mean to say 'Yes'." This should be repeated three times, so that no mistake should occur in this. Then he should speak: "Are you willing to communicate with us? Yes or No?" The answer will very often be 'two tilts' indicating 'Yes'.

The questions should be clear, short, and categoric. The

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answer to be expected should be 'Yes' or 'No' and never an ambiguous one. One typical question is—"We are four persons sitting here; our order of numbers would be one, two, three, four." Each number is to be indicated by pointing to the persons assigned to that number. Then speak: "Well now, whose relation are you? Please tell us by tilting the table." The answer will be given. The next question should be: "We have a board of the letters of the alphabet and a planchette or a rolling board of wood with an indicator. Are you willing to communicate with us through that rolling board?" The answer would be two tilts.

The round table and the initial communication through it by its tilting would give some conviction and confidence for further conduct of the seance. The rolling board should then be taken up; the paper board of the alphabet is to be spread upon the table; the rolling board is to be placed over the paper board. Each letter of the alphabet is to be shown or pointed out with the index finger, while pronouncing one by one; then the figures of the number are to be similarly shown and pronounced; lastly, the words 'Yes' and 'No' are also to be shown and explained.

The above procedure might look strange or ridiculous, but it is generally followed and assures, so to say, both the sides of this communication. The first question may be put to the unseen presence thus: "Please spell out your name." Any two persons of the seance should lightly place the four fingers (excluding the thumb) upon the upper surface of the rolling board. The rolling board is placed far back on the paper board; the rolling board begins to move forward towards the letters of the alphabet; the hands and the fingers should remain passive; let the rolling board move with some force unseen; but it is really felt at the tips of the fingers of the hands placed upon the rolling board.

The letters spelt out by the moving board should be noted down by another person seated at the table; when the name or the message is complete or the movement of the rolling board comes to a stoppage, it should be read out and asked: "Is it Yes or No?" If the answer be No, the unseen presence should be requested: "Please repeat it once more." Such procedure as this is certainly laborious, but there is no help other than this, if the seance be intent on receiving a sort of authentic message

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from such an unseen source. With a little practice in the beginning, the rolling board or planchette moves quickly enough satisfactorily.

Comparatively greater force is required and felt in tilting the table; hence four persons should bear that unseen force. In the movement of the rolling board, a slightly small force is enough and so is it felt also; therefore two persons are enough at a time; more than two persons might do it, but the movement becomes cumbersome; one person does it still more quickly, but it should not be attempted; for the pressure of the unseen force will have to be borne by a single person at a time. This is not desirable also for some reasons.

After the seance has run for an hour, the unseen visitors should be asked to leave: "Thanks for your message and communication! The seance is coming to a close for today. We shall be conducting it next day (or so many days after) at this very hour here in this room. . ." This ends the seance. I have given the usual procedure of such a seance in this section. It is only to show how it is done. It does not in any sense or intention mean the least recommendation for holding such seances in private or public.

For it is not meditation; the spirits, if they really visit in such seances, are not seen, nor tangible, nor perceived; the messages cannot be made public; we cannot prove their authenticity; it is obviously unorthodox; it is in a way a sort of refined type of exorcism. These very things can be said of the automatic writing, mediumship in speaking, etc.

The automatic writing is conducted with a pencil in hand over a blank paper placed upon the table; the message is taken down by moving the hand passively, as if the unseen force is guiding the hand. The mediumship of a person, mostly a fair sex, consists of her remaining passive, while reclining on an easy chair; she speaks out as if the unseen force is making her speak.

The passive state of body and mind in such seances contra-indicates the state of meditation. Meditation in yoga generally, nd in Buddhism particularly, is always active, and never assive. Hence quietism in meditation is not to be found in e Master's system. The existence not only of spirits but also

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of heavenly beings is accepted in Buddhism, as in other Oriental religions. The higher beings are invoked in Vedic and other rituals; the spirits of the departed ones are helped to rise to the higher states of region in these rituals; it is very seldom that the spirits are invoked and communicated with in any religion.

There are, however, several instances in Buddhist literature when spirits were recognized and talked to even by the disciples of the Master, monks and nuns, rarely lay men and women. The Master had often to find out where the departed persons, who were Buddhists while living, found themselves after their decease. Such a question put to any religious teacher at present would elicit wonder or a reprimand from the latter. But then it appears to be quite general. One out of many instances we shall narrate in the next section.

Invocation and Recognition of Departed Ones

The Janavasabha sutta, the 5th one of the second part of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, is an exceptional but authentic discourse on the invoking and recognizing of spirits. It is depicted in a natural manner, but the commentary on this sutta gives us some astounding figures about the spirits who achieved higher regions and statuses under the Master's preaching programme. The textual enumeration of these departed ones fully tallies with that of a similar account found in the "Dhamma-ādāsa" or the Mirror of the Dhamma section of the Mahāparinibbāna sutta (*Dīgha* II. 3).

There is, however, some difference of detail in these two suttas. The latter section, the Mirror of the Dhamma, states that the elder Ānanda inquired about the fate of some particular disciples. The Master's answer was definite; a certain monk, Sālha by name, had experienced the state of liberation both through meditation and insight while living; so it implied that he passed away into Nibbāna. One nun named Nandā attained the third state of anāgāmin or non-returner hereto; she would pass away into Nibbāna from wherever she is in the next world.

The answer further disclosed that eight householder disciples also attained the state of non-returners. Two other householders, one male and another female, had reached the states of the second and first initial categories of noble Dhamma, respectively. Their names are given; they were all of the village (town) of

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Nātika lying between the villages (town and city) of Koṭigāma and Vesāli. This is a very difficult prophecy, for it entails the three branches of supernormal knowledge; these are the mind-to-mind, the divine eye, and the defilement-eradicating branches of knowledge.

The readiness, with which the Master answered the questions of his attendant monk, Ānanda, is itself surprising. The confidence of the Master in his answers should not fail to convince us of the unique experience also. This portion of the account is not found or included in the Janavasabha sutta mentioned above. The later account to be stated below is, however, not excatly given in both the suttas, the Janavasabha and the Mahāparinibbāna.

The first of these suttas says:

> Once upon a time the Blessed One was dwelling in the monastery of Giñjakā (literally, made of bricks) in Nādikā (or Nātikā). At that time (in those days) the Blessed One was prophesying the fate of the Buddhist followers already dead and passed away (living) in countries all round, (such as) the countries of Kāsi and Kosala, Vajji and Malla, Cetiya and Vansa, Kuru and Pañcāla, (Maccha) and Sūrasena,—the fate of their being born (in the next world or region) as (in such words) 'Such a person is born in such a place (or region); such a one is born in such a place.' (*Dīgha* II. 5.)

This introduction is obviously significant and shows the general practice of those early days. The Buddha was certainly expected to know and declare the fate of his adherents. From the few references to such declarations made by other specific teachers, we have to admit that this sort of knowledge was not an isolated and exceptional event in those early days. If our present day savants fail to discern this sort of phenomena, it might be attributable to their indifference to acquire such knowledge.

The later account to be stated below is not so specific as the former account given above, which is also found in the Giñjakāvasatha suttas (*Samyutta* 55—8, 9, 10), with the addition of

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two names, Asoka and Asokā, monk and nun, who are declared as liberated doubly through meditation and insight as the monk Sālha mentioned above. This specific record must show that the unspecified record of the later account also was as much particularly discerned by the Master as the former.

This is the account given in the later section of the said Mirror of the Dhamma in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta, as well as in the Giñjakā-avasathā sutta (*Samyutta* 55—10):

> More than fifty lay-disciples (male upāsakas) already dead in Nātikā . . . are spontaneously born (opapātikas), sure to pass away into Nibbāna therefrom (where they are so born), and not subject to return (here) therefrom. More than ninety upāsakas already dead in Nātikā . . . are once-returners and shall end the sufferings by being born in this world only once. More than five hundred upāsakas already dead in Nātikā . . . are Sotāpannas (entrants into the noble dhamma) not subject to fall into lower states and certain of attaining the Knowledge of Liberation (in seven rebirths) at the longest.

The above account is given of the Master's prophecy of these six hundred forty, and some more male lay disciples living in the village of Nātikā alone, who are already dead. This discourse is addressed to the attendant monk, the Elder Ānanda, in all the accounts except in the Janavasabhā sutta. In spite of this, the role of Ānanda will be presently appreciated in this very sutta. The account, as we have observed above, is not exactly given in both the places as we should have expected. The word upāsaka (lay disciple) in the Mirror of the Dhamma is replaced with that of paricāraka (servant or attendant) in this sutta. They are further specified as Nātikiyā (belonging to Nātikiyā) in this sutta, instead of merely as 'dead in Nātikā'.

Now Nātikā appears to be an important place, a town between Koṭigāma and Vesāli. We have several significantly interesting suttas delivered in Nātikā. This should give us a sort of confidence in the main topic we are interested in. In the next section we shall deal with the Janavasabha sutta in detail. What we find therein about the invocation of the spirits is

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strikingly similarly to what we have done about the modern seance. The spread and depth of the Buddha's vision cannot, however, be compared in any sense with that of our modern blind attempt at such a seance.

Nevertheless, there is some resemblance in the two. There is no spell or mantra in such an invocation; an earnest attempt at remembering the spirit appears to be enough; the spirit thus invoked does no harm to the invoker and the audience. The presence of the spirit or spirits is not seen in the modern seance, but it is slightly felt nonetheless; in the meditative method, the spirit is said to be seen and holding conversation. In both cases the spirit does not stay here longer than what he or she thinks fit or can stand or remain with ease here before the invoker for reasons unknown to us. We may, however, form our own ideas about it in the next section.

Discourse on Janavasabha, Spirit of Bimbisara

As stated in the previous section, the Blessed One was prophesying the fate of his followers (paricārakas) already dead and belonging to countries all round, such as Kāsi-Kosala, Vajji-Malla, Cetiya-Vansa, Kuru-Pañcāla, and Maccha-Sūrasena. These are ten of the sixteen countries renowned in those early times. This appears to have been introduced here as a background; for this sort of events must have preceded those of much earlier times than the last year of the Master; the sojourn in Nātikā, as the sutta records, was certainly about ten months before the Great Passing-away of the Master.

This sutta evidently emphasizes the invocation and appearance of spirits. As stated in the preceding section, more than six hundred and forty lay disciples of the Master were declared to have attained different stages of the higher Dhamma. These persons all hailed from Nātikā. Consequently the people of this village were "gladdened, pleased, and delighted by hearing the Master's prophecy".

Now the attendant monk, the Elder Ānanda, who was already present there, naturally heard the Master's prophecy about the achievement of these lay disciples of Nātikā and also how this sort of declaration made the people of this village full of joy and delight. Then the Elder Ānanda began to think thus:

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There also certainly have been those followers (paricārakas) and adherents (rattaññus) in great numbers who belonged to the country of Magadha already dead. The countries of Aṅga and Magadha appear to me to be empty on account of Aṅga-Magadhan followers (of the Master) having been already dead. They also had been joyfully devoted to the Buddha . . . to the Dhamma . . . and to the Saṅgha; they were also keeping the rules of virtue and morality perfectly well. They have been already dead (but still remain) unprophesied by the Master. Their declaration should also be (made and it would be) proper; thereby many persons would be pleased and earn better fruits (in the next world) likewise.

He continued thinking:

There also has been this King of Magadha, Seniya Bimbisāra, (who was) virtuous, pious king, protector of Brāhmaṇas and house-holders, towns and countries. Even the people admiringly praise him thus: 'The virtuous, pious king having made us happy in this manner has passed away. We were living comfortably in the country ruled by that virtuous, pious king.' He was also joyfully devoted to the Buddha . . . to the Dhamma . . . to the Saṅgha and to the observance of the rules of moral conduct. Even the people say so: 'Upto the last time of death, King Magadha Seniya Bimbisāra died while praising the Blessed One admiringly.' He is already dead (and still remains) unprophesied by the Blessed One; the prophecy about him is also proper; this would please many and thereby they would get better fruits in the next world.

He pondered further:

The Enlightenment of the Blessed One was in the Magadha country. How is it that, where the Blessed One had (his) Enlightenment, there in Magadha the Blessed One should leave unprophesied the followers of Magadha who are already dead? If the Blessed One should leave the followers of Magadha who are already dead unprophesied, the followers

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of Magadha would be thereby distressed. Since the followers of Magadha would feel distressed, why should the Blessed One not prophesy them?

The above thinking of the attendant monk clearly shows that the prophecy about the fate of the deceased followers was not merely a figment but a verity in those times. The Buddha could speak what is true and the true prophecy demanded a far-reaching vision into regions unknown to us presently. Without careful investigation into such things, we cannot deny the possibility of them with ease and comfort and even without compunction. Meditation and its practice seem to be only the means of attaining such a supernormal knowledge as to be efficient in proving or disproving this sort of phenomena.

It should, however, be understood that the belief in such things is not necessary for the practice and attainment of samādhi, stages of supramundane knowledge and lastly, Nibbāna in the Master's system. The Master has insisted nowhere in the suttas as regards compulsory acquisition of such knowledge, which is attainable in the course of meditative practice or career. At any rate the Elder Ānanda thought on practical lines and rightly resented the situation disfavourable to the Magadhan people and country.

Thinking thus over the question of the Buddhist followers of Magadha when alone and in a secluded place, the Elder Ānanda, having risen up at dawn, went up to the Blessed One . . . and said: 'Bhante! I have heard this . . . ' Having said this . . . on the subject of the Magadhan followers before the Blessed One, the elder Ānanda, having arisen from his seat and having paid his respect by walking round the Master (from the left so that the object of reverence lies to the right side), went away.

This was a sort of complaint expressed by his favourite disciple and most probably by many Magadhans also. The commentary on this sutta says that the Master had not then prophesied the fate of the six countries, such as Aṅga, Magadha, Yonaka, Kamboja, Assaka, and Avanti nations (raṭṭhas). The

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reason is not given therein. Four countries out of these six, excluding Aṅga and Magadha, lie outside the visiting circuit of the Master. It is really surprising that the important countries, Aṅga and Magadha, should have escaped the Master's attention.

> Soon after the elder Ānanda had left him, the Master in the fore-noon having dressed himself and taking up the begging pot and the robe entered Nātikā for alms. Having taken a begging round in Nātikā, after food, being released from alms, and having washed the feet, the Master entered the building of Giñjakā monastery. He sat down there on the seat prepared for him. On the subject of (his) followers belonging to the country of Magadha, he concentrated and collected the mind from all the sides, thinking thus:
> I will known their fate (gati) in the other world (abhisamparāya), what fate they have, and what condition they are in [in] the other world.

The above sentence in Pāli is simple prose; it is not spell or mantra in any sense; it was not repeated by the Master any number of times; these two sentences contained in it indicate the mental concentration on the topic he was interested in. The Master's omniscience is subject to adverting or attention (avajjana-ppaṭibaddham bhagavato sabbaññuta-ñāṇam), as the elder Nāgasena has also defined it in his answer to King Milinda (Milinda-Pāñha IV, para 20).

Nevertheless the attention of the Master directed towards the information he desired to be acquainted with is not without significance; this attention should give us the clue to this knowledge; there is no spell or mantra; there are no rituals; it is an earnest intention oriented to the departed ones and their likely existence after death. It does not, however, mean any belief in a religious sense.

> The Blessed One verily discerned (his) Magadhan followers as to what fate they had and what condition they were in [sic] the other world. Then the Blessed One having arisen from meditation (paṭisallāna) and going out of the Giñjakā Building in the evening sat down on the seat prepared (for

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him) in the shade behind the Monastery. Then . . . Ānanda came up . . . and said to the Master: 'Bhante! Bhagavā! You look quite calm; your face is shining owing to the clarity of the organs of your body; surely your reverence passed this day in calm meditation'.

The Master said in reply to the attendant: When you, Ānanda! having talked to me about the followers of Magadha and left me, then I . . . concentrated and collected the mind from all the sides, thinking thus: 'I will know their (the Magadhans') fate in the other world, what fate they have, and what condition they are in [sic] the other world'. I verily discerned (my) Magadhan followers as to what fate they have (had) and what condition they are (were) in [in] the other world . . .

The Master continuing the discourse said: "Then verily, Ānanda! a certain invisible Yakkha was heard making this word: 'I am Janavasabha, sir! I am Janavasabha, sir! Do you remember, Ānanda! having heard before this such a name as Janavasabha?" Here the word, Yakkha, means a powerful spirit; Janavasabha literally means a bull of men and significantly a man full of vigour like a bull.

No sir! I do not remember having heard before this such a name as Janavasabha; but sir! my hairs stand on end on hearing the name of Janavasabha. It (however) occurred to me, sir!—'He is certainly not an ordinary Yakkha whose name is so well conceived as Janavasabha.'

"Immediately after the manifestation of the sound, Ānanda! a Yakkha of an excellent appearance appeared before me. And a second time also he made the word manifest: 'I am Bimbisāra, sir! I am Bimbisāra, sir!' This is the seventh time, Bhante! that I am born in the companionship of Vessavana, the Ruler (of the north). When fallen down from here, I can become the king of men.

This is an authentic account of a reliable sutta in the *Dīgha Nikāya*. We cannot possibly deny it as we shall see in the next section.

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Unique Concurrence of Invocation and Manifestation

We have seen how the Master was thinking, as described in the previous section, over the Magadhan lay disciples already dead but supposed to be living somewhere else. He was simply concerned about their whereabout. It is said that he discerned what he wanted to see and to know. The commentary on this sutta of Janavasabh (*Dīgha* II. 5) says: " 'Discerned'—How many mendid he (the Master) discern? Twenty-four hundred thousand (24 lakhs)."

The commentary seems to have derived this figure from the text itself which will be clear later on. We cannot, however, sum up this number from suttas; this should have been calculated from mass conversions, which is the special characteristic of the preaching capacity of the Buddha. One of such mass conversions is recorded in the Mahāvagga (*Nikāya* I. 1, 16 Bimbisāra-samāgama-kathā). This is as under:

> Then the Blessed One having stayed, as long as he desired, in Gayasisā, left for Rājagaha on a preaching tour . . . Then King of Magadha, Seniya Bimbisāra accompanied and surrounded by twelve nahuta (ten thousand, that is one hundred twenty thousand) Magadhan Brāhmaṇas and house-holders approached the Blessed One . . . in the garden of Laṭṭhivana . . . Then the Blessed One began to preach to them.
> Thus eleven nahuta (one hundred ten thousand) Magadhan Brāhmaṇas [and] house-holders headed by Bimbisāra obtained, in the same seat of theirs, pure and undefiled insight (Dhammacakku) that 'whatever is subject to birth and growth is all subject to death and destruction.' One nahuta (the remaining ten thousand) accepted Buddhism only as lay men (upāsakas).

Evidently the former one hundred ten thousand persons became sotāpannas or entrants, the earners of the first stage of noble Dhamma. This was certainly a mass conversion to Buddhistic enlightenment, a marvel of preaching capacity displayed by the Buddha.

The Cariya-Piṭaka, the last book of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, records in the Gotama Buddha-vansa: "Ten-twenty-thousand (or

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two hundred thousand) persons had mass conversion (or enlightenment, dhamma-abhisamaya), while the conversion of one and two (individuals) or the individual conversion was innumerable."

Be it so; we are concerned more with the immediate appearance, manifestation, or attendance of the spirit of Bimbisāra who called himself as Janavasabha even before the Master he had adored while he was living. The Master had not particularly invoked him; the Magadhan followers of course included the King; but what the spirit of King Bimbisāra reported to the Master could not have occurred by a mere chance.

The spirit told the Master that he had been able to remember seven human births and seven heavenly births of the past, that is, fourteen births of the immediate past. It was all due to his devotion to the Buddha's discipline (sāsana), so did he tell the Master. Then he narrated the reasons as to why and how he visited the Master:

> Here Bhante! I, being sent by the ruling deity Vessavaṇa to another (similar) ruling deity Virūḷhaka on a certain business, saw on the way your reverence, having entered the Giñjakā Building . . . being seated, thinking: 'I will know their fate and condition in the other world . . . ' It is however surprising, Bhante! what I have heard and learnt well on the fate and condition of theirs (of the Magadhans) as related by Vessavaṇa, the ruling deity himself. It occurred to me thus, Bhante!—'I will visit the Blessed One and also tell your reverence this (news).' Bhante! these were the two reasons (which prompted me) in coming over here to see your reverence.

This is a unique concurrence of two great events. One of the two was a sort of invocation by the Master; the other was a happening of still greater significance to be described in the next section. The text does not disclose the particulars or even the nature of the message the spirit is supposed to be carrying from one heavenly ruler to another. It is also strange that the messengers chosen by the former was exactly the person or spirit the Master was probably invoking as the Headman of Magadhans during the time he was engaged in.

It is also strange that the spirit came over to the Master of his

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own accord exactly at the time when he was in a way being invoked by the Master. It cannot be a mere chance happening in the spiritual world—a significant chance as fully described in this Janavasabha sutta; wherein Sanaṅkumāra Brahmā suddenly appeared in the assembly of heavenly beings and made a strange but important observation to be discussed in the next section.

In Buddhist scriptures we generally find Brahmās appear to make some significant and important pronouncements; and Sanaṅkumāra is one of them; in Vedic literature his namesake is known as Sanatkumāra.

Manifestation and Pronouncement of Brahma

In the previous section we have dealt with the background of the spirit of King Bimbisāra. He was, as we know, a historic person and ruled the country of Magadha for many years during the life-time of the Master. He was a fit person to inform the Master that some two and a half million Magadhan followers of his (the Master's) already dead but inhabiting the heavenly region were enjoying the fruit of at least the first stage (sotāpatti) of the higher dhamma.

This information, the spirit said, was originally pronounced by Sanaṅkumāra Brahmā in the assembly of heavenly beings. Brahmās cannot be supposed to miscalculate the number of persons attaining a certain stage of liberating. Even the Brahmakāyika Brahmās can discern the mind of the liberated one, as is fully described in the Tissa-Brahma sutta (*Aṅguttara* VII. 6.3).

Now Sanaṅkumāra is a much higher Brahmā than the Brahmakāyika ones. This Brahmā appears to be a friend and a great admirer of the Buddha. The pronouncement about the Magadhan converts to the dhamma made by this Brahmā was reported to the Master by the spirit of Bimbisāra, called a Yakkha, Janavasabha by name. The Yakkha heard directly from his leader, Vessavaṇa by name. Yakkhas' leader directly heard it in the assembly of heavenly beings from Sanaṅkumāra Brahmā himself.

The spirit reported to the Master briefly as follows:

"In the former times, still much earlier, in the holy Uposatha day, in the Full-Moon day in the beginning of the Rainy

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resort . . . the heavenly beings of the second region (Tāvtinsa) . . . were gathered and seated in the heavenly assembly (named) Sudhammā . . . Then sir! from the northern quarter a great light appeared . . . Upon this Sakka, the Leader of heavenly beings, said: . . . 'this is verily the precursor of the manifestation of Brahmā' . . . "

The spirit explained further:

"When Bhante! Brahmā Sanaṅkumār appears before the beings of the second heaven, he appears in his visible form created (for this visit): for Bhante! the natural form of Brahmā is incapable of being seen (even) through the eye of the Tāvatinsa heavenly beings . . . "

This is his simple narration; he must have been already aware of the Buddha's capacity of knowing of such divine visit; but he displayed his eagerness herein too much in implying that the Brahmā would be hardly visible even to him.

Then Bhante! Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra having created his form as a kumarā (young child) . . . thirty-three in number . . . and seated each one of himself in the lap of each heavenly being . . . addressed them as follows:

'Don't you think, Tāvatinsa (thirty-three) Devas! how much the Blessed One . . . has been beneficial for the good of beings, human and divine. Out of those who have taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha . . . after the dissolution of the body and after death, some are born in company with (that is, in the region of) the inhabitants of Paranimmita-vasavatti (sixth) heaven, some are born in company with those of Nimmānarati (fifth) heaven, some are born in company with those of Tusita heaven, some are born in . . . Yama heaven, some are born in . . . Tāvatinsa (thirty-three, that is, this very) heaven, some are born in company (Sahabyatam) those of Cātummahārājika heaven, and those who get the worst quality of body, they have the body of the Gandhabba'.

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The spirit continuing his report said:

Then Bhante! Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra drew all his created bodies into (his own) single body. Having contracted them into the single body, he seated himself on the lap of Sakka, the Leader of Devas, addressed to the Devas (again):

'Don't you think, Devas! . . . how well the Blessed One has described . . . these four Iddhi-pādas or the bases of supernormal powers, such as, . . . Well, I have also practised and developed these very four bases of supernormal powers; thereby I myself am so competent and powerful . . . There are also three spheres of attainment for the peaceful experience discovered . . . by the Blessed One . . . There are four bases of Memory Culture so well described by the Blessed One . . . '.

It is very significant to find this powerful and authentic Brahmā so admiringly recounting the principal practices in the Buddha's system of meditation in the assembly of heavenly beings. The purpose of doing so might have been probably to gain a respectable recognition of these practices from the higher class of the populace. Nevertheless it is scarcely unthinkable that this Brahmā was not inducted in the Buddha's system during his own life-time; for we come across this name in several places of the Sutta-piṭaka.

The regular visitor among the Brahmās to the Master was, however Sahampati who had succeeded in arousing the Buddha's interest in preaching the dhamma he discovered. It would have been very interesting to collect the accounts relating to Brahmās found in the Pāli *Tipiṭaka* for comparative and analytic studies. At any rate Sanaṅkumāra Brahmā appears to be a very respectable, straightforward, and trustworthy Higher Being known in scriptures for precise and correct statement in spiritual matters.

This Brahmā has pointed out something specially interesting and noteworthy in the few principal dhammas of the Master. Thus he has shown how he has himself been so facile in performing the feats of supernormal power by means of the four Iddhipādas which, he pointed out, had been so well described by the Master. The three 'okāsa-adhigamas', or

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spheres of attainment for peaceful experience, mentioned above are the novel ways of presenting the Master's system in three facets. Even in the four bases of memory culture, the Brahmā has ingeniously brought up a unique approach to it.

After explaining the sequential connection of the items of the eightfold path, the Brahmā drew the attention of his audience to the main topic under discussion. Praising the dhamma that is well described by the Buddha, the Brahmā said:

> The door of Immortality is open for those who are well established in joyful devotion to the Buddha, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha, and also to moral discipline. And here are those Opapatikas (spontaneously born) as Devas, disciplined in the (Buddha's) dhamma, numbering more than twenty-four hundred thousand (who are) Magadhan Buddhist followers (who have) come after decease having destroyed three impediments (samyojanas); these are Sotāpannas (entrants in the stream of the dhamma), incapable of falling down into base births, definitely classified as inclined to gain enlightenment.

The Brahmā added further: "Here are certainly (some) Sakadāgāmins (once-returners)." It is not all. There were some more in still higher attainment, that is, Anāgāmins (non-returners), which was voiced in a verse:

> There are others, partakers of virtue, I surmise; But for fear of misstatement, I do not count them.
> Thus the Yakkha Janavasabha reported to the Blessed One what he had directly heard from Vessavaṇa speaking before his own assembly (of Yakkhas)...This was spoken to the Tāvatinsa Devas by Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra...This was again informed in his own assembly by the ruler Vessavaṇa, as he had heard it spoken by Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra in the assembly of the Tāvatinsa Devas.

The sutta does not stop here. It further says:

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> This was again told to the elder Ānanda by the Blessed One who had directly heard and learnt it from the Yakkha Janavasabha. The elder Ānanda having heard and learnt it directly from the Blessed One informed the monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen of it...

This sort of sequential reporting and recounting must speak with authenticity or at least the intention of making it specially authentic.

In the next sutta (*Dīgha* II. 6 Mahāgovinda) also this Sanaṅkumāra Brahmā prominently figures. This second account was, however, reported to the Master by the son of a Gandhabba, Pañcasikha by name. The Master was then staying on the Vulture Peak (Gijjhakūṭa) in Rājagaha. In this discourse it was this Brahmā who related the story of Mahā-govinda, the Jātaka story of the Bodhisatto himself.

The story was also told by this Brahmā in the assembly of the heavenly beings; it was reported to the Master by the Gandhabba-putta, Pañcasikha, on the Vulture Peak. The Master fully corroborated the story of his own former life. So we find this Brahmā to be intimately acquainted with the Master...And the latter is also friendly towards the former. On account of this corroboration, this suttanta was also known as spoken by the Buddha, so says the commentary on it.

The Janavasabha sutta discussed so far should be taken seriously; for the commentary on it says as follows:

> It is said (kira) that formerly Mahā Theras (old elders) used to recite this very sutta in the beginning of the rainy sojourn (vassupanāyika). Why was it so? It was because they thought that they would get the advantage of preaching the dhamma by dividing all the three Piṭakas (into the three okāsa-adhigama as shown by this Brahmā above).

This is enough to show the successful mission of the mass conversion to the real Buddhistic insight through the preaching capacity of the Master. By the way, this gives us an authentic information on the existence of spirits also. We cannot deny it; we may ignore it, if we can afford to do so.

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VII

Rest of Abhibhāyatana Devices

Formula of Organizing Second Abhibhayatana

IN THE course of dealing with the practice and device of Abhibhāyatana, we introduced the controversial topic on spirits in some detail. This diversion was unavoidable on practical ground; for the practice on this device is that of subduing the very support upon which one has to practise it. The support is generally natural objects and living beings; but incorporeal beings may sometimes appear before a meditationist. If the yogin is not prepared beforehand to see or meet such a vision or figure, the phenomenon may disturb his mind with varying effects.

The practice of Abhibhāyatana would always protect the amateur or yogin on such cccasions. The Bodhisattva himself had imaginary fears on imaginary figures; the Bhaya-Bherava sutta (*Majjhima* I. 4) says so. In course of the talk between Jaṇussoṇi Brāhmaṇa and the Master on the fearsomeness of seclusion and wilderness, the latter says:

"To me also, Brāhmaṇa! before my enlightenment, when I was still unenlightened, being in the state of a Bodhisatto, thus it had occurred: 'Fearsome are...seclusion and wilderness...to those who fail to obtain samādhi.'..." By practice the Bodhisatto subdued this sort of fear as soon as it arose in his mind. Describing the process of eradicating it, the Bodhisatto says:

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> Thus it occurred to me, Brāhmaṇa! why shouldn't I remove the fear and terror in the same manner as the fear and terror come to me? When Brāhmaṇa! the fear and terror come to me while walking to and fro (caṅnkamantassa). Then Brāhmaṇa! I neither stand up, nor sit down, nor lie down; I remove the fear and terror (exactly) while walking to and fro. When I remove the fear and terror while standing. When being seated ..I remove the fear and terror while being seated. When...lying down... I remove the fear and terror while lying down.

The above method of removing the fear and terror had been evidently tried by the Bodhisattva before his Enlightenment. These fears were of course imaginary; but such imaginary terrors sometimes drive their victims out of sanity and even to loss of memory and life. Our savant, Buddhaghosa, had also amply warned the novice against such dangers in the sixth chapter of the *Visuddhimagga* while describing the disagreeable objects for meditation as follows:

> Now 'what is the purpose of observing the signs all round?' It is for not being confused...One who goes out to the place of the disagreeable object (swollen, dead)...untimely (avelāyam) and opens eyes, for grasping the sign, and looks at it (the swollen dead body), (he) sees as if the dead body arising has stood up, as if it has spread out, and as if it is following him (the novice). Having seen this ugly and terrible support, he (the novice) being demented becomes as if he is insane, and gets terror, stupefaction, and horror. (Para 5.6)

These are imaginary fears; but there are some awe and fear arisen out of real incorporeal beings called spirits. These spirits might be good or bad, higher or lower, holy or unholy. We are not, however, to become servile to them. All the systems of oriental yoga teach us that the heavenly figures try to allure the yogins away from the right path to liberation and Buddhistic yoga is not an exception.

The practice of Abhibhāyatana is in short a method of

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overpowering, subduing, or at least transcending the support to be made use of in meditation. The so-called 'Three Māra-Kaññas' (kanyās or girls) are not different from the celestial damsels come to allure the sages approaching the highest goal. In the same way the Māra and Māra-senā are probably the real impediments met with in the road leading to the final goal.

Accordingly, the method of abhibhāyatana, although not expressly given in the relative suttas, can be surmised and tentatively practised from what is given and found in several suttas already referred to in the third and fourth chapters above. The Bodhisattva must have practised it so well that nothing could impede him from his final objective.

After his Enlightenment, when he determined to go to Isipatana for the purpose of preaching his unique doctrine, he was met and accosted on the way by a certain naked ascetic, the Upaka by name; Buddha answered the ascetic: "I am the subduer of all (sabba-abhibhū); I am the knower of all (sabba-vidū-ahamasmi)." This verse is found in identical words in the *Dhammapada* (verse no. 353), in the Mahāvagga (Vinaya I. 1. 1. 6.), *Majjhima* (I. 26), and *Majjhima* (II. 35); and also (II. 27) and *Dīgha* (II. 3).

The first word above must certainly mean the thorough practice of abhibhāyatana; the second word signifies that there is a way to know all; but all the things known must also be subdued, as otherwise these things might overwhelm and thereby subdue the yogin himself.

We have already learnt in the preceding chapter (last two sections) how the Master witnessed about two and a half million spirits of his Magadhan followers. Had he not been already perfect in abhibhāyatana, this vision of such a magnitude could not have left him unaffected. He was nonetheless unusually delighted; this was marked and expressed in words by the elder Ānanda. Hence this practice is necessary for the organization of destiny, the Main Thesis of the present phase under research.

The first abhibhāyatana has been already and fully dealt with in the first section of the fourth chapter above. The next section thereafter was also devoted to the same. In a way the second abhibhāyatana is not at least in its formula different

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from the first one; but we shall have to study them one by one, if we are to be benefited by this unique method of organizing samādhi and at the same time subduing its vision and phenomenon.

The formula is as follows:

"Perceiving oneself (as an individual) with shape and form one sees the external shapes and forms (which are) unlimited, pretty and ugly. Overcoming these, one perceives thus: 'I know, I see (these)'. This is the second Abhibhāyatana." The word 'unlimited' here may not mean 'limitless', but as large as one extends one's field of vision; this is the meaning given in the commentary of the first book of the Abhidhamma on the Abhibhāyatana-kathā of Part III.

The above meaning appears to be rational also, for the pretty and ugly cannot be limitless at the same time. The difference between the first and the second abhibhāyatanas seemingly lies in the dimension of the external 'shapes and forms'. In the first it is 'paritta' or small, or limited, while in the second it is as large as one can possibly perceive and conceive. In both the abhibhāyatanas the vision of the external object may be either pretty due to its clarity and purity, or ugly on account of its obscurity and impurity.

In order to avoid this confusion, the *Abhidhamma* has taken only the dimension into consideration for the regular division, the old commentary also has done so, as the said commentary mentions in the same place. So far as the internal shape and form of the subject are concerned, the said commentary 'Aṭṭhasālini' is definitely of opinion that the subject cannot be subdued and that the external shapes and forms are only capable of being subdued. Hence the *Abhidhamma* has taken the internal subject as 'arūpa', or without shape and form, in all the eight abhibhāyatanas.

The key point in this practice is 'tāni abhibhuyya' or 'overcoming these' supports of visible objects. Now these supports act as stimuli to the visual organ; on them the cognitive process runs till the javana moments turn into the appanā or samādhika moments. The intention of subduing or dominating the visible objects in the case of visual concentration seems to be present in it during its organization and maintenance. The

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satisfaction felt on account of such overcoming is, however, an after-thought; for this is an abhoga and cannot appear during the continuance of samādhi. This is the position taken by the commentator of the Mahā-Sakula-Udāyi Sutta (*Majjhima* II.27) and also that of the Dhammasaṅgaṇi.

'I know, I see,' these supports—this idea or concept—is said to be an ābhoga, which I have interpreted above as the satisfaction felt at such overcoming. The difference between the basic jhāna and abhibhāyatana should be clearly understood; the former is a natural flow of calm and quiet meditation; the latter, on the other hand, is a specific flow of meditation and concentration. We cannot, however, describe exactly how it overcomes the objects of vision, except what we have been trying to suggest and tentatively present in the likely device.

Nevertheless, the method of artificial kasiṇa would appear at first glance to be easier than the abhibhāyatana we have dealt with so far. In reality, however, the latter device should be easier than the former kasiṇa; for that device is natural and this kasiṇa is artificial.

Formula of Organizing Third and Fourth Abhibhayatanas

From what we have seen about the first and the second abhibhāyatanas in the initial sections of the fourth as well as this very chapter, it should have been clear that this device is different from other devices of meditation. It is regarded, by the commentators on the relative suttas and the *Abhidhamma*, as skin to kasiṇa practice. The latter is easy to comprehend and conduct. The former (abhibhāyatanas practice) is not as easy of comprehension as that of kasiṇa.

In kasiṇa, we are asked to practise at first on a small object and then to go on increasing it; the perception of the sign or object should permit of expansion; so much might be clear even to a novice. From the practical viewpoint, however, the recall of visual perception of the sign termed 'after-image' (uggaha-nimitta) is difficult; the counterpart sign (paṭibhāga-nimitta) said to arise out of the after-image is still more difficult; it is quite uncertain and does not lie within our will and power to bring about this sign whenever we like it.

Abhibhāyatana practice is obviously natural. The object or

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support is natural; what we find outside is the object for meditation; there is nothing to be prepared for beforehand. The novice would look at the surrounding objects and organize the first jhāna on these supports, while trying to subdue or overcome the perception obtained of them. It is, however, difficult to be definite about the method of subduing these supports and the nature of the experience.

Let us proceed on this method and see if we can make out what its secret is: for the successive unfolding of its stages would make up what the text lacks in supplying us with its paraphernalia. Hence we are directly introducing the formula of the third Abhibhāyatana:

"Without perceiving oneself (as an individual) with shape and form, one sees the external shapes and forms (which are) limited, pretty and ugly. Overcoming these, one perceives thus: 'I know, I see (these)'. This is the third abhibhāyatana."

The formula of the fourth abhibhāyatana runs: "without perceiving oneself (as an individual) with shape and form, one sees the external shapes and forms (which are) unlimited, pretty and ugly. Overcoming these, one perceives thus: 'I know, I see (these)'. This is the fourth abhibhāyatana."

Obviously, the difference between the formulas of the previous first and second abhibhāyatanas and these present third and fourth ones lies only in the conception of the perceiving self. In the former case the conception of the perceiver is clothed with shape and form (rūpin), while in the latter case the perceiver does not figure at all. In Buddhism, the self is not conceived at all; 'there is no perceiver, no knower, and no doer'. Buddhism says, 'in reality: we are, however, not concerned with its sophisticated philosophy and logical concatenation. In yoga and its proposition, the best we should do is to keep ourselves free from any dogmatism'.

The commentary on the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, as we have already mentioned above, defends the position of the Dhammasaṅgaṇi, the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, in doing away with the perceiver possessed of shape and form (ajjhattam rūpa-saññin), with the plea that the internal form cannot be subdued, and that it is the external form which is to be subdued. The commentary has also commented at the same place

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(abhibhāyatana-kathā, part III) that the division of these two categories, rūpa-saññin and arūpa-saññin, is a mere instructional knack (desanā-vilāsa) of the Master. This is too much even from the pen of the commentator, old or new.

From our practical experience, it can be fairly said that the self-possessed of a body gross or subtle is sure to come in any practice. It is also true that the conception of self with form or without form goes on diminishing in the progress of meditation. The *Abhidhamma* is however strictly methodical and exhaustive in its outlook; hence it has adopted the wording of the self without form in all the eight abhibhāyatanas.

The said commentary, however, explains the phrase 'Ajjhattam arūpa-saññin' or internally perceiving oneself as without form, as follows: "Herein (it is so) due to non-availability, or non-liking, or inability to conduct initial organization on the own internal form." This provision, by the way, covers all the possibilities, so to say. Nevertheless the internal self should not have been so discarded from the Master's authentic discourse in the *Abhidhamma*.

Four Colour Abhibhayatanas

The later four devices of abhibhāyatanas are like those of the later four colour kasiṇas. The description of the four colours is the same in both types of the device; the examples and similes of the particular colour are also the same; the similarity in description might make us think that the two types at least in these four colours are one and the same. This is not really so.

In the practice on the colour kasiṇa, the artificial disk of the relative colour is at first gazed at; the sign is learnt well; this learnt sign or the after-image (uggahanimitta) is recalled at leisure; thereafter the really significant meditative sign called the counterpart sign (paṭibhāga nimitta) has to be patiently awaited. When this sign appears on the mental horizon, our savant assures us confidently that the field of the first jhāna or form trance sets in; but he does not define nor describe the nature of this form trance, nor tell us how this is and what this is like.

The abhibhāyatana, on the contrary, is not at all conducted,

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or at the most described, as the kasiṇa in its initial practice. The former is, or appears to be, practised on the natural objects as they are found in nature. Even in these four colour abhibhāyatanas the novice is not asked to make an elaborate preparation for the relative coloured field in nature or in the collection of such objects.

In kasiṇa practice it can be fairly admitted that the artificial disk of colour is undoubtedly scientific, practically handy, and comfortably uniform. The emphasis given to it in the commentary tries to assure us of the fact that this device is the only one adopted from the earliest time, when any ancient yogin might have arisen in our ever known and imagined world.

If the commentatorial account regarding this practice is really true and effective, the kasiṇa would be the only one of the yogic practices ever practised by the yogins of the Buddhistic category ancient and modern. But such a theory can be scarcely entertained by us at present. This makes us, consequently, critical of the commentary or its allied literature. From this point of view, the imagination of the Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna) of Buddhism is as much open to doubt and confusion as that of the Greater Vehicle (Mahāyāna) for its exuberance or samādhis.

Blind faith and unverified logic in the real question of life and death will lead us nowhere. Only a critical approach to the Buddha's system of meditation is most probably a better way to learn, comprehend, evaluate, and internalize what may be taken as the true doctrine of our Shākya Prince. later known as the Most Enlightened One; He is nonetheless a human being and was open to shortcomings we are also prone to. Were it not so, he should have been an unapproachable image before us to be admired on our visit to it and not amenable to be imitated for solving our problems. These problems might include our desire to overcome the impediments to progress. This is abhibhāyatana.

From what we have discussed so far, it should have been clear that the device of abhibhāyatana or that of overcoming the support or the subject of meditation must be very useful in organizing the invocation and visualization of the spirits of persons already dead. Whether we might believe the existence or phenomena of these spirits or not, our imagination is

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certainly sometimes so strong that we happen to see something unnaturally alive. The mental tension at the time becomes so acute as to make us believe that the spiritual phenomenon is real and living.

Accordingly, to save or protect ourselves from some untoward consequences, the device of overcoming these visions real or imaginary should be practised to some extent. And the best way to do so appears to be the colour abhibhāyatana. Before discussing this facet of abhibhāyatana, we intend to present some evidence of such spirits as found in the Master's own reported experience.

These spirits are not really the ghosts whom we regard as partly corporeal and incorporeal individuals recently separated from the material body which was alive before its physical death. We are afraid of such ghosts for several reasons. But the spirits we are going to treat of are generally of a good moral nature. They are, so to say, endowed with subtle bodies; they are called spirits only because they do not possess any material body as we do. They are much more powerful than we are, but they do not, or are not permitted to interfere in our mundane affairs.

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VIII

Unique Visits

Eight Assemblies of Beings, Human and Divine, Subdued

THE OBJECTS of meditation may be subdued in several ways and also considered from several angles. We know through our own commonsense also some of these viewpoints. For instance, we see lots of things displayed, stored openly, or left to our frequent inspection; we check ourselves from any undue, undesirable, and even unconscious possession of them. The Master has defined such a check on oneself as 'samvara' in general.

The downward tendency of morality is easy and the upward trend is comparatively much more difficult. The subduing of the former and the adopting of the latter would entail the overcoming of the adopting of the allurement of surrounding objects and their discrimination. If it is so according to our commonsense, its use cannot be done away with in the higher states of meditation and supernormal phenomena.

The basic meditation, as we have said more than once, is an internal adventure, so to say. The vision of outside objects gradually gets internalized; the visual perception slowly rises up into the form aspect out of the material one. One does not look intentionally at the external objects; the stimuli of such objects strike the eyes; the visual perception is seen; the yogin does not intently look or gaze at them; these are seen as if casually. This is the way to basic meditation.

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Kasiṇa practice on the other hand is initially an external project; the yogin is taught to gaze intently at the kasiṇa; It is a learning process. The learnt sign would be recalled, and in time the counterpart sign may appear.

In common parlance, the objects of meditation in the practice of abhibhāyatana would be just a natural scene and scenery. The novice would be asked to take such outside views and to concentrate the mind on the perceptual aspect of the natural panorama. The contrivance of bringing about the first trance by suppressing the vitakka (mental speech) and afterwards the vicāra (thinking) also would be the main agency in bringing about the form trance with the overcoming intention of the product of the very samādhi.

We do not, however, find any sutta that should give us an indication that this practice had been practised by the Bodhisattva and later by the Buddha. This is a great disadvantage in evaluating this practice correctly. Nevertheless, circumstantial evidence shows that the Master had fully utilized it and, in a way, established it as a habit. The evidence of this sort of overcoming may be obtained from the Master's confidence over the eight assemblies of beings, human and divine, described in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (II. 3) and the Mahā-sīhanāda sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (I. 12). The account runs thus:

> These are verily eight assemblies, Ānanda! (in the former,) Sāriputta! (in the latter sutta). Which are the eight? (They are,) Khattiya, Brāhamana, House-holder, Samana, Cātumahārājika (rulers of four directions), Tāvatinsa (thirtythree devas of the second heaven), Māra and Brahmā Assemblies. I remember verily to have approached many a hundred assembly of Khattiya (warrior class),...Brāhmaṇa (priestly class). Gahapati (householder or middle class), Samana (monk or nun), Cātumahārājika (mythical rulers of the four quarters), Tāvatinsa (thirty-two deities who rule over the second heaven; with Sakka as their sovereign), Māra (subtle overlord of beings human and heavenly, or a mysterious spirit who can enter anybody for his specific purpose), and lastly, Brahmā (virtually the most powerful deity) with their companions and followers.

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This sort of visitation of the Buddha as a supernormal spirit in the shape and form of the members of the particular assembly is open to some doubt. This record is, however, taken from the most authentic sutta of the *Dīgha-nikāya*. The Master is explaining to his favourite attendant and cousin, Ānanda. The commentary on this sutta does not give us any coherent and consistent meaning. The commentator himself seems to be groping in the dark as to what the Master must have been hinting at by such mystifying reminiscences of profound significance.

This visit of the Buddha was never silent, but a sort of his regular preaching programme and that in the shape and form of the audience. When was it? Was it in that very life as Gotama Buddha? We do not know that, but we cannot discredit such a clear statement as we find here. It says as follows:

> There also (in those assemblies) I feel to have taken part before, talked before, disscussed before...Therein (in those assemblies) what short of appearance they (the members of the assemblies) possess, the same sort of appearance of mine also becomes. What sort of voice they are possessed of, the same sort of voice becomes of mine also.

The commentary on this sutta, Mahāparinibbāna, especially on this piece of 'eight assemblies', appears to be earlier than on the similar piece of the Mahāsīhanāda sutta (*Majjhima* I. 12). It is simply because the latter commentary quotes the text of the former sutta. And the latter commentary also contains preliminary matter more than the former does.

The practical evidence of this abhibhāyatana having been utilized by the Master seems to be prominently clear in this record of the 'eight assemblies' of beings human, spiritual, and divine, as included in these two suttas of the most authentic *Nikayas*, the *Dīgha* and *Majjhima*. The text can, however, be smoothly reconciled to our commonsense and sense of properiety. The commentary on the other hand goes beyond the limit of our credulity. We cannot accept the commentary in its flight of imagination and unauthenticated blind belief.

In this respect the imaginative enthusiasm of both the Vehicles of Buddhism (Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna) goes beyond the very spirit

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of our Prince Siddhārtha of the modest kingdom of Kapilavastu. The Buddha of both the Vehicles would appear to be extraordinarily personified and devotionally depicted; to be supernalized in the Lesser Vehicle and deified in the Greater Vehicle. The real spirit of our Buddha in his human nature, qualities, emotions, and excellence can be met with, evaluated, and imitated only in his system of meditation and of gaining supramundane insight.

The text of these eight assemblies said to have been visited by the Master is also found in the 'Parisā sutta' (*Aṅguttara* VIII. 7. 9.) without further exposition. The text of the Mahāsihanāda sutta (*Majjhima* I. 12), however, gives us some further information relating to the power of such visits. The sutta says:

> These are eight assemblies, Sāriputta! Which are the eight? ...these are the eight assemblies. Endowed with these (foregoing) four branches of masterful knowledge (vesārajja), the Tathāgatha (the Buddha) approaches and penetrates these eight assemblies. I remember, Sāriputta! to have approached many a hundred assembly of Khattiyas, . Brahmās . I do not see any sign or reason, Sāriputta! therein that any fear or confusion would occur to me (in these assemblies). Not seeing that (sort of) sign, Sāriputta! and endowed with confidence, fearlessness, and masterful knowledge, I pass (the time) in meditation (viharāmi .)

Such a statement as given above would appear quite natural for the world teacher and more so from a fully liberated person. The four branches of knowledge are given as follows:

> These are four branches of masterful knowledge (vesārajjas), Sāriputta! of the Tathāgata, endowed with which the Tathāgata claims to have known the distinguished persons and places of high significance (āsabham ṭhānam), makes a lion's roar in assemblies, and sets the universal doctrine (Dhammacakka) in motion as a rolling wheel.

The word 'vesārajja' is differently interpreted in the Pāli commentary from what it should have been in Sanskrit as

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'vaiśāradya' or the quality of being versed in knowledge. The commentary on the above sutta (*Majjhima* I. 12) explains it as follows:

"Vesārajja—is herein the opposite of 'Sārajja' (inferiority complex). It is the name of the knowledge produced out of the joy generated by observing the absence of 'Sārajja' (inferiority complex) in the four (most important) subjects." These four subjects are given in detail in the said sutta and might be summarized briefly as given below:

There is nothing left unknown by the Master who has claimed himself to be fully and perfectly enlightened. This is the first subject. There is no defilement (āsava) left uneradicated by the Master who claims to have been freed from these defilements. This is the second subject. The impediments (to liberation) as told (by the Master) do not impede it (liberation), that is, these do so. This is the third one. Who is specifically instructed for a special purpose (of liberation) does not succeed in destroying the suffering completely. This is the fourth one.

In short, the Master is well and perfectly versed in the art and science of Liberation. This supramundane knowledge includes the omniscience he has always claimed to possess with his Enlightenment (Sambodhi). This is why he has never and nowhere felt the least inferiority complex (sārajja). This is his Mastery (vesārajja).

Obviously this is the perfection of a human Buddha, attained by a human being through human efforts. He has never said that he was born as such nor such powers came to him without efforts. His system of meditation shows that he had to practise for everything he gained, attained, and possessed. By the way, this very element of human nature is a source of our inspiration, encouragement, and hope of attaining what he has attained—the Enlightenment, that is, Liberation with Omniscience.

The authentic suttas about these eight assemblies already discussed above emphasize the importance of abhibhyatana, fully endowed with which the Buddha could and can visit or appear anywhere unhampered and unattached for purposes best known to him and him alone. This is the reason why we cannot dogmatize about the complete extinction of liberated beings

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after their death in a physical, metaphysical, or psychological sense.

Commentatorial Interpretation of These Visits

The text, about the Master's visit to the eight types of assemblies described in the preceding section, is not clear regarding its praticulars. We do not know whether the text means the immediate or remote past of such visits made so mysteriously by the Buddha, as the text itself describes so definitely.

The commentary on this piece of the textual information given in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta (*Dīgha* II. 3) is briefly as follows:

> 'Many a hundred Khattiya-assembly'—(in the text) resembles the meeting of Bimbisāra, (Shākya) relatives, and Licchavis. Such (assembly) is however available even in other worlds (cakkavāḷas) . . . They (Khattiyas) are white, or black, or yellow in colour, but the Master (when he appears among them) is always golden-coloured. This is however (in the text as regards his similar complexion) told for (the similar) shape, but the Blessed One does not appear as a barbarian (Milakkhu, Mleccha in Sanskrit); nor adorned with jewels and ear-rings; he sits down (in such assembly) in his own Buddha's garments.

Nevertheless they (the men of the assembly) see this shape like their own, the commentary says. Similar comments are made on the difference of the voice, tone, and harmony of those men and the Master. The same sort of comments are made on other assemblies.

The commentator understands that the example of these eight assemblies was brought forward by the Master in order to show the fact of his fearlessness. In the context of his life-span, the purport of this example must have been truly as the commentary also understands. It was to show that he did so not due to any fear complex before the entreating Māra.

The practice of abhibhāyatana habitually established in the mental set-up of of the Master could never permit any being or

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even human or divine to disturb his equanimity or purpose if there be any. The controversial element personifying on this occasion as Māra could only remind the Master that his premeditated mission has been already completed, which is as much as to say that he would have no further zeal and hence need for living.

The commentary on the Mahāsihanāda sutta (*Majjhima* I. 12) is a little more detailed than what we find in the preceding sutta. We shall bring in here only some particularly interesting points introduced in this latter commentary. The four Masteries (vesārajjas) are very clearly explained here. On the topic of impediments to the Path and the Fruit of the Dhamma, the Buddhistic rules of conduct have been strongly emphasized. The lapse in any of these rules is said to create an impediment to both these fundamentals of the Dhamma.

"Herein however the sexual intercourse (methuna-dhamma) is meant. There is surely an impediment to the Path and the Fruit of the Dhamma for anyone else who indulges in sexual intercourse." This is very serious and worth due consideration. Without attaining either the Path or the Fruit (Magga, Phala) in any one of the Four Stages of Liberation, no one whosoever can claim to have the attainment of the Buddha's Dhamma.

This is true for the supramundane dhamma; it does not however bar anyone from attaining the mundane meditation, supernormal knowledge, and trances and absorptions of mundane category—all found in the Master's system of meditation. This is why this research may give encouragement to anyone prone to human weakness and shortcoming. We propose to deal extensively on this important facet of mundane and supramundane categories of trance, absorption, powers, and insight in the next phase of this research.

This commentary understands in this context as follows:

> Why is this (topic of eight assemblies) begun? It is for showing the strength of the knowledge of mastery (vesārajja). As in the learned assembly . . . the skilfulness of a preacher is known; so it is possible to know the quality of mastery . . . by entering these eight assemblies (and preaching therein) . . .

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The assembly of Māra is that of the inhabitants of the Māra region, and not that of Māras.

This (visit to these eight assemblies) is also available in other worlds (cakkavāḷas). Is it then that the Blessed One (the Buddha or the Master) goes to other worlds also? Yes, he goes. In what sort of form? As they are like, so in the like form. The commentary then introduces the relative text as under:

"I remember verily, Ānanda! my approaching many a hundred Khattiya-assembly. Therein what sort of colour (complexion) they have, my colour also becomes like that . . ." This is the text, word for word, as we find in the sutta described above (Mahāparinibbāna). It is really strange. Why does this commentary fail to quote the text of this very sutta addressed to Sāriputta? Is it because the sutta addressed to Ānanda is more authentic than the identical piece of the text of this sutta addressed to Sāriputta? Otherwise there is no reason why the commentary on the *Majjhima Nikāya* should forthwith quote the identical text of the *Dīgha Nikāya*.

Moreover, the novel idea of this commentary about the possibility of our Buddha's visiting other worlds would show the initial and simple sign of latter developments of world systems in both the Vehicles of Buddhism. The text of these suttas is rather ambiguous; it might mean the immediate past events experienced in this very life-span of our Gotama Buddha, Prince Siddhārtha of Kapilavastu.

Or it might mean the secret power of the Buddha in general, whether he be the Gotama, or the Ones of the remote past, or the Ones of the future. This sort of discussion would carry us too far surpassing even that of some works extant in both the Vehicles of Buddhism.

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IX

Importance of Meditative Uniformity

Formula of Organizing Colour Abhibhayatana

WE HAVE already dealt with the form ula of organizing the first abhibhāyatana in the fourth chapter of this phase above. The formulas of the second, third, and fourth phases dealt with in the sixth chapter were not very different from that of the first one. This was only so superficially.

The approach and extent of the four abhibhāyatanas were fundamentally different from one another; so the experience gained therefrom would likewise be different. Now the practice of colour abhibhāyatana, already mentioned and briefly described in a separate section in the sixth chapter above, is still more different from the first four of eight abhibhāyatanas.

We might wonder at the uniformity of formulas for organizing these four colour abhibhāyatanas. Are these colours available in nature so easily in such a flawless uniformity for daily practice? If they are not, the commentary must be right in suggesting the novice for preparing an artificial disk of colour kasiṇa for daily practice with its full implication of paraphernalia described by our savant, Buddhaghosa, in his work.

Nevertheless, we do not find the least suggestion of artificiality even in these colour abhibhāyatanas in the identical words. It is worth due consideration. Had the Master meant any artificial

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device even in its preliminary stage, he would have certainly indicated it by some fitting example or simile, as we find in the disagreeable contemplation on the physical body, its component parts, and the states of its gradual disintregation.

The instruction of these eight abhibhāyatanas is expressly found more often in the suttas (*Dīgha* II. 3 and III. 10 and 11; *Majjhima* II. 27; *Aṅguttara* X. 3. 9) than that of a similar number of kasiṇas, made so popular in the commentary and the work of our savant, Buddhaghosa. The commentary on the Dhammasaṅgaṇi, the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, says indeed: "Whether it be Kasiṇa, or Abhibhāyatana, or Vimokkha, it is surely the meditative trance of the form category (rūpāvacara)", so says the above commentary on the same topic (kathā). The difference between these three practices is, according to the commentary, merely modal. It says:

> It (the said meditative trance) is Kasiṇa in the sense of the entirety (sakala) of the support (arammaṇa); it is Abhibhāyatana in the sense of the subduing of the support; it is Vimokkha in the sense of the possessing of the support with confidence and also of being freed from the adverse dhammas thereto.

If so, how are we to assign the position in the Dhamma to them?

The commentary does so: "Therein the instruction of Kasiṇa is in accordance with (vasena) the Abhidhamma; the other two are however told in accordance with the instruction of the Suttanta; thus is to be understood" (para 398 at the end of the Vimokkha-kathā).

The above conclusion arrived at by the commentator is only partly true. For in the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, Dhammasaṅgaṇi, the practice of the form trance, that is, rūpāvacara-kusala' is treated of as much with eight kasiṇas as with eight abhibhāyatanas and the first three vimokkhas.

The commentary on this very book, Aṭṭhasālini, has faithfully followed the text and interpreted the device of the 'paṭhavi kasiṇa', the very first of the eight kasiṇas, as follows:

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> Paṭhavi kasiṇa (earth kasina)—herein the Earth-globe (maṇḍala) is called the Earth Kasiṇa in the sense of its entirety; the sign obtained on it (the earth) is also (called the earth kasiṇa); the trance (Jhāna) obtained on the sign is also (called the earth kasiṇa). Therein in this context the trance (Jhāna) is to be understood as 'Earth Kasiṇa'. Herein the meaning in short is that the novice organizes the trance known as the 'Earth Kasiṇa'.

The artificial device of kasina is not quite clearly mentioned therein, nor can it be derived forthright from these comments. It is only fully given and emphasized in the *Visuddhi-magga* (chapters IV and V). This artificial device of kasina was seemingly the later development of the earlier natural device, which appears to be akin to that of abhibhāyatana. It is to be noted that the commentator, or our savant, or anyone of our later savants, could not suggest any artificial device for organizing the textual type of abhibhāyatana.

The advantage of practising on a small disk of kasiṇa, elemental or coloured, would surely appear to be more favourable than that of a natural kasiṇa, so far as the uniformity of the object of meditation is concerned. But the greatest disadvantage of artificiality lies in our awareness of the very artificial nature of the device, wherein we are called upon to concentrate for some superior purpose which is real and spiritual.

For example, the four truths are based upon real facts of suffering, upon the real cause of its arising, upon the real experience of its cesssation, and lastly upon the real and trustworthy method of meditation and insight. Anything smacking of artificiality would mar the seriousness of this spiritual content of Buddhism.

It is true that the Master has spoken of several types of uniform expanse for or in meditation. Kasiṇa is obviously an expanse of elements and colours, not as we find it in nature, but as it is grasped, perceived, and conceived. This expanse, it is to be noticed, mostly extends on two dimensions of length and breadth, that is, on a flat surface or plane. There are, of course, some contemplations which are directed gradually to all the main directions on a global scale. We shall not, however, be

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dwelling on this topic here at this stage, and shall pass on that of meditative uniformity, as mentioned on the title of the heading of this chapter.

Before doing so as said above, we shall be bringing the formula of colour abhibhāyatana as given below:

> Without any conception of oneself as an internally perceiving factor (ajjhattam arūpa-saññi), one sees forms outside all blue, of blue colour, blue appearance, and blue brilliance. For example, (it is as) the 'Ummā' flower looks all blue, of blue appearance, and blue brilliance. Or again for example, (it is as) the cloth of Bārānasi (Banaras), polished on both the sides, looks all blue, of blue colour, blue appearance, and blue brilliance.

The formula continues its purpose of bringing in the two above examples as follows:

> In the same manner, one without the conception of one's own internal self sees forms outside all blue, of blue colour, blue appearance, and blue brilliance. And subduing these (blue forms), he becomes conscious of the perception as 'I know, I see'.

This is the formula of the blue abhibhāyatana. "This is the fifth Abhibhāyatana." So says the text.

Tentative Method of Organizing Blue Abhibhayatana

The formula of the blue abhibhāyatana is identically the same as stated in the previous section and found in the suttas (*Dīgha* II. 3 ; III. 10 and 11; *Majjhima* II. 27 ; *Aṅguttara* X. 3. 9.). The textual matter without the two examples is also found in the Dhammasaṅgaṇi (1. 1. 2. 10). Thus textually this device or practice is as genuine, real, and authentic as any one of the Master's important devices of meditation.

We could have expected the colour kasiṇa in the text described as fully as the colour abhibhāyatana, but the former is not thus described. The reason is quite clear. The practice of abhibhāyatana must have been very

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popular in the time of the Master. But unfortunately for us, the graduated method, so prominent in the Sati-paṭṭhāna sutta, is so to say, wanting in this important practice.

Nevertheless, there are several relevant practices, mentioned and taught in other important suttas, which give us sufficient indications applicable in this practice too. These indications are being utilized here in order to present a procedure of practices—tentative and open to correction by any would-be expert or novice, as the practiser might like to evaluate it upon himself.

This is tentative, not because the different composites of this are imaginative, but only for the reason that the procedure as a whole cannot be found in a single sutta. The compositer or components of this whole method will each be found in several suttas nonetheless. The commentary on the above-mentioned suttas (*Digha* II. 3 ; *Majjhima* II. 27) is identical and not much helpful for our purpose.

We shall start this practice as a novice ignorant of any philosophy other than what we actually feel, perceive, and seem to know and understand. It is this :

Seek some lonely place wide, quiet, and fresh. The place should be abounding in shrubs with blue flowers, when we intend to practise on this Blue Abhibhāyatana. If we are successful to some extent on this device, we might select places with shrubs bearing yellow, red, and white flowers, as the case might be. Our plan of practice however should be one at a time and that in the order of colours ; 'Blue' at first ; then 'Yellow' for a few days ; thereafter 'Red' for some time ; lastly 'White' for several days.

Look at the blue flowers ; if they are plenty, sit down at some convenient distance therefrom; take them as a whole in a single glance. Keep the glance steady and constant ; let us forget that we are looking at them ; the visual perception has brought forth the blue percept ; the complete sign of the Blue Abhibhāyatana in front is to be subdued. What we firstly looked at was the natural object with physical qualities, such as hardness, heaviness, solidity, obstructiveness, etc. But now we find something different from what it was before.

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It is a mere visible something, neither hard, nor heavy, nor solid, nor obstructive ; it is a simple percept or concept present in front of us, that is, outside some internal source of ours ; this source is however left unorganized for the time being (ajjhattam-arūpa-saññi).

We are meditating and not making any mental deliberation in speech ; Vitakka and Vicāra, or initial and sustained application of thought, or practically mental speech and thinking, disturb the simple flow of meditation ; when those do not arise, we are already within the meditative field. The visual percept becomes the corresponding concept in calm and quiet meditation.

This state of meditation is produced by our own making ; so this meditative production cannot and should not overpower us ; we are its creator and as such we are competent to subdue it ; it is seemingly easy, for it is only a field of blue perception. But it should not be undervalued ; the meditatively externalized blue-field might overwhelm the meditator with powerful joy (pīti), one of the five factors of trance (jhāna).

In the Master's system, the trance is never to be allowed to overpower or overwhelm the meditator with its joy or happiness (sukha). It is even so in the field of supernormal powers. In the field of the invoking of ghosts or spirits, the appearance of the latter, if not subdued, might be even disastrous. Suppose a bend of ghosts should appear at a single call and seem to surround the meditator as in a dream, the practice of Abhibhāyatana would seem at least the most helpful.

This supposition might seem ridiculous, and the band of ghosts as nothing more than a stunt to some of us who have never had the occasion of meeting such fears real or imaginary. Fear of ghosts might be unreal, empty, and imaginary ; but the effect sprung out of its sudden occurrence has been unfortunately found to be undeniably real. Such fear, when it occurs, goes on increasing, if not checked in time. The practice of abhibhāyatana would at least check such fear at its very onset.

Whether we happen to be concerned or unconcerned with

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such phenomena, these uncommon things happen and we should not let any bias of ours impede the study of this interesting facet of world literature. And in the relative literature of Buddhism, we can find a variety of such phenomena for study.

To continue the topic of organizing the blue abhibhāyatana, joy (pīti) and happiness (sukha) are the two important factors of the form trance (Rūpāvacara jhāna); they show the stage of trance the yogin attains. The higher or more peaceful stage of trance is attained or reached only when the lower or less peaceful one is transcended ; this is as much as to say that the latter stage is being striven after.

There is, however, a fundamental difference between any one of the gradual trances and the device of abhibhāyatana. In the former the yogin does not attend intentionally to any object of perception ; he is merely dwelling in wide-awake memory ; the external stimuli to senses give rise to perception as if automatically ; he is not attentive knowingly to these stimuli ; the perceptible objects appear to him gradually as mere percepts of little consequence; he is not concerned at all with their appearance or even disappearance. This is the criterion of the form trance.

In the device of abhibhāyatana, the meditator attends intentionally to the object of perception, the blue-coloured flowers in this device under consideration ; he is fully aware of the blue perception, while keeping his memory wide awake ; he directs his attention to the stimuli, that is, the blue flowers ; he is thus knowingly attentive to them ; the perceptible, that is, visible, flowers appear to him as percepts of interest, that is something to be subdued ; he is little concerned, however, with their appearance or dissappearance. This is the criterion of the meditation on abhibhāyatana.

Thus it should have been quite clear that the basic or gradual trances in the Master's system are in perfect harmony with his doctrine of Liberation and Nibbāna. Liberation could and even now can be gained through intellectual insight after any one of the basic trances, which is said to be imperative for the attainment of a real sense of Liberation.

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Elucidation and Exemplification of this Tentative Method

We had selected, in the preceding section, the blue abhibhāyatana for displaying a method of organizing it tentatively. Now we are going to elucidate it by some examples from the text and the commentary. The blue colour visible on the blue flowers (ummā-puppha in the text) would be obviously less uniform than that of the blue-coloured and polished cloth (of Bārānasi). But the commentary on the relative text of both the suttas (*Dīgha* II. 3 ; *Majjhima* II. 27) explains this difference as follows :

"Nīla-nidassanāni (blue appearances) mean—by appearance, without marking the gaps (between the uniformity of blue-coloured flowers), without broken colour, that is, looking wholly blue." Evidently the commentry does not suggest the adoption of blue-coloured cloth instead of blue flowers herein. The device of fresh flowers has greater advantage over polished cloth even spread over a wide area for this practice, it seems.

The commentary shows this advantage accordingly as under: "Ummā-puppham—this flower is smooth and soft, and also looks blue in appearance ; whereas the 'Giri-kannika' etc. flowers look white in appearance. Hence this (Ummā) flower is taken here, not those (Giri-kannika) flowers."

The above remark is very significant and shows a sort of adverse view on what is said in the blue kasiṇa as given in the Visuddhimagga (Chapter V. para 13).

Accordingly, we have chosen shrubs bearing blue flowers, which are plentiful in nature. Further, the commentator of the sutta explains the cloth of Bārāṇasi as below:

> Bārāṇaseypakam—(the cloth) produced in Bārānasi (Banaras). Therein it is said that the cotton is also soft, the spinners and the weavers are also skilled, the water (of that place) is also pure and soft. Therefore that (sort of) cloth becomes polished on both the sides; it looks polished, soft, and smooth on both the sides.

The commentary, however, refers to the *Visuddhi-magga* for the preparation of the blue kasiṇa. This shows that, in its opinion, the preliminary of the blue kasiṇa and of the blue

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abhibhāyatana is the same. We have already shown in the perceding section that there is some difference in the two devices. The device of a kasiṇa, if artificial, has an elaborate process; whereas the device of an abhibhāyatana is never artificial and is forthwith taken as it is found in nature. There are still other significant differences between the two devices.

The commentary on this sutta, however, gives us some useful hint on the mode of organizing its preliminary as the following:

> Ajjhattam rūpa-saññi on account of preliminary work done in the internally conceived body, one becomes the perceiver of internal body . . . One, whose preliminary work begins inside, but its sign (appears) outside, is called as one who perceives his internal body and sees forms outside . . . (On the other hand) 'Ajjhattam arūpa-saññi' one, who is devoid of (such) preliminary work in the internal body owing to non-attainment or not-liking (for such body); and one, whose preliminary work and its sign also begin outside is called as one who does not perceive any internal body but sees forms outside . . .

The sign (nimitta) of external forms is taken in the appanā (samādhika) state by the commentator, as otherwise the appearance of forms would mean nothing; for even the people in general see things outside in their waking state. What the commentator fails to convince us of is his unsatisfactory interpretation of the characteristic word of "abhibhuyya" (literally having overcome, or subdued).

This word is explained as follows:

"Tāni abhibhuyya"—(having overcome them—the external forms) . . . immediately with the appearance of sign, the yogin attains Appanā (samādhic state); this is the meaning." If so, it is a sort of facility in organizing this device, not of overcoming the meditative phenomena themselves. We cannot accept this sort of explanation.

The example of the manifestation of Māra and his terrible army on the eve of the Master's Enlightenment is before us. This unusual scene before him might have been merely his

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vivid fancy; but just at that moment the scene might have been terrifying; it was subdued anyhow by the Bodhisattva with the result that the scene totally disappeared. Later on, the three damsels of Māra displayed the most alluring drama before the Master; it was also subdued and made to disappear soon. This sort of mastery in meditation must have been the victory, and not merely the facility, in meditation.

The mysterious person called Māra tried and could sometimes even create a deception on some young monks and nuns. The latter could not be deceived for long; they have declared their victory over the former; this might have been due to their practice in abhibhāyatana, and not merely through facility in meditation. Nonetheless, we cannot say that commentary has misunderstood the very term abhibhāvana or overcoming, so apparent even literally.

The reason might have been the usual moral safeguard sought by the commentary. It cannot encourage any novice to practise such device as might lead him towards the mastery of worldly matters. The commentary has been always careful to emphasize the moral issues before bringing in anything leading to supernormal power and knowledge. Buddhistic literature claims to record the Master's precept, which is indeed based on moral integrity.

Formulas of Other Colour Abhibhayatanas

We have fully discussed the blue abhibhāyatana in the previous sections. There are three others to be described now. Principally the blue device is enough to understand those of other colours; but separate formulas exist in the text; we should therefore take them one by one in order to show how they are worded in similar formulas, but with needed variations in colour and apt examples.

The repetition of similar words in these formulas makes us believe in a way that this device or kammaṭṭhāna must have been regarded at one time, even in the time of the Master, as important and necessary for the disciples. Were it not so, it might have been shortened as we find in the kasiṇa formulas.

Nevertheless, the colour kasiṇa has been described in much detail by our savant in his work, *Visuddhimagga*. He has left

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nothing unstated what he thought to be useful in the kasiṇa device. Those of us who find the the colour abhibhāyatana inconvenient, might at first try the colour kasiṇa, which has been already dealt with in the preceding phase under the relative colour devices (Chapters V to IX).

The advantage of one practice over another is appreciated only when we directly experience something of both the devices. At any rate the kasiṇa is really more convenient than the abhibhāyatana, so far as the device for grasping sign is concerned. But we must not forget that the latter will appear more natural and life-like than the former, if the artificial device has to be prepared beforehand. The commentatorial literature is, however, decidedly in favour of the former, that is, the kasiṇa method. Under these circumstances it would be better to practise one at a time and see for ourselves if we can get benefit from both the methods.

Now we give below the formula of the yellow abhibhāyatana:

> Without any conception of an internal body of one's own, one sees forms outside all yellow, of yellow colour, yellow appearance, and yellow brilliance. For example, the kanikāra flower looks all yellow, of yellow colour, yellow appearance, and yellow brilliance. Again for (another) example, that cloth of Bārānasi polished on both sides looks all yellow, of yellow colour, yellow appearance, and yellow brilliance. In the similar way,
> Without any conception of one's own internal body, one sees forms outside all yellow . . . and of yellow brilliance.

This would also be the description of a natural device of the yellow kasiṇa: but our savant has much to say on the preparation of the yellow device. The main difference of the abhibhāyatana is given thus:

Having subdued those (forms described above), one becomes aware of 'I know, I know, I see'. This is the sixth Abhibhāyatana.

This is the criterion of this type of meditation, so to say.

We might wonder at such a criterion as stated above; what is there in the yellow field of perception to be subdued ? There

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is indeed something to be checked in our perception itself apart from the object, upon which the phenomenon of perception arises. This something, according to the commentary, is the opposite (paccanika) dhammas, which are our own mental concomitants. By subduing these, the objective support is also subdued.

The corresponding device of the yellow kasiṇa (*Visuddhi-magga*, Chapter V. paras. 15 and 16) mentions the Patanga in addition to Kanikāra flower. We need not bother about these names. Any plant bearing yellow flowers would serve the purpose of this device. Other things would be similar to what was said in connection with the blue abhibhāyatana.

The next abhibhāyatana is worded as follows:

> Without the internal conception of one's own body, one sees forms outside all red, of red colour, red appearance, and red brilliance. As for example, the Bandhu-jīvaka flower looks all red, of red colour, red appearance, and red brilliance. And again for example, that cloth of Bārānasi polished on both sides looks all red, of red colour, red appearance, and red brilliance. In the same way.
> Without any conception of one's own internal body, one sees forms outside all red . . . and of red brilliance. And having subdued these (forms), he becomes aware (conscious) of 'I know, I see'. This is the seventh Abhibhāyatana.

The corresponding kasiṇa mentions three kinds of red flowers, viz., Jayasumana, Bandhujīvaka, and Ratta-koraṇḍaka, etc. instead of Bandhujīvaka alone (Ibid, V. paras 17 and 18).

Lastly, the formula of the white abhibhāyatana is as given below:

> Without any conception of an internal body of one's own, one sees forms outside all white, of white colour, white appearance and white brilliance. As an example, Osadhi Tārakā (medicine star, any prominent white star, or the planet Venus), looks all white, of white colour, white appearance, and of white brilliance. And again for example,

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that cloth of Bārānasi polished on both sides looks all white, of white colour, white appearance, and of white brilliance.

In the same manner, one without any conception of one's own internal body sees forms outside all white, of white colour, white appearance, and of white brilliance. And having overcome these (forms), he becomes aware (conscious) of 'I know, I see.'

The criterion of the last element, that is, the awareness or consciousness of 'I know, I see', has been minutely discussed in the commentary. It understands that it is impossible to feel as 'I know, I see' while one is within the state of trance; such a feeling as 'I know, I see' occurs only after coming down from the state of absorption (samāpatti). Accordingly, the mental concomitant as 'I know, I see' termed as 'ābhoga' in the commentary has also been discussed in the First Phase (ābhoga) of this research.

'Ābhoga' is thus the remembrance of the enjoyment in the state of samādhi, it is therefore an after-thought and not the samādhic state itself. The commentary, however accepts that the consciousness of overcoming or subduing the opposite concomitants and the support of external objects is present also during the state of organizing and maintaining the abhibhāyatana. This is, however, the psychological subtlety in the samādhic conception of the commentary. The novice has nothing to do with such subtlety. It is enough if he can organize and maintain a samādhic state; the state itself often teaches him what to do further, so to say simply.

If the novice or even the yogin fails to keep his mental balance in the state of samādhi, say that he is enjoying it, he will not be able to transcend it and to achieve what the Master has claimed to have discovered and taught to his disciples. It is especially so in the field of abhibhāyatana, the field of this sort of meditation is never to be enjoyed, if we are intent upon subduing it.

The repetition of the formula of each device might be irksome; but it was the only way to be sure of the method of conducting yoga in those early times. Had we a condensed

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form of formulas for all the devices now, it would have never convinced us of its genuineness as based on the Master's system. The flow of samādhi itself is in a way a repetition of like mental moments. It is strange that we are not bored by such repetition even for a long period of samādhi, if it could be maintained by such repetitions.

Application of Abhibhayatana for Meditative knowledge

The Master is said to have gained the three branches of knowledge through his mastery over meditative states in the Fourth Jhāna. Had he not overcome the vitakka and vicāra or initial and sustained application of thought in the first jhāna or trance, he could not have attained the Second jhāna. Had he not overcome the overwhelming joy arising out of it, he could not have reached the Third jhāna. By subduing the pleasure or happiness over-flooding the third stage of trance, he attained the fourth stage, the balanced state of purified non-attachment and alert memory.

Now the human destiny of one's own and others is full of wonders; on each freak of them we might be entangled due to our emotion, likes and dislikes. The practice of abhibhāyatana might help us tremendously in keeping our mind calm and quiet amidst remembrances and future glimpses not to our liking. Our own past lives, if vividly remembered, could not be much likeable, even our destiny, if clearly foreseen, could not be always rosy and encouraging.

If we are to be able to remember or foresee correctly these secrets, we shall have to rise above our own emotions, likes and dislikes. The practice of abhibhāyatana is probably the most appropriate in this respect. Not only the Master's precepts, but there are individual instances also, which illustrate what we have indicated above. Viewed thus, we are not at any great disadvantage by forgetting what is past and by not knowing beforehand what is in store for us.

Not only this forgetfulness and the ignorance of the future seem to us a boon, but even the penetration of the hidden knowledge of truth also would not appear to be a great boon. Nevertheless, we are ever eager to know what we were in the past and are going to become in the future and also what

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is hidden within or outside these ever-changing phenomena, no matter what their consequence be.

The Shākya Prince discovered the unique nature of the first form trance while he was a householder in his homeland. The outside forms were and are indeed widely varied, but the perception arisen therefrom was and is certainly uniform; were it not so, there would never have been a state of samādhi. The importance of his discovery was and is virtually the continuance and maintenance of the uniform perception, till it manifested its samādhic character.

Similarly, his discovery of the method of abhibhāyatana opened up the uniform way of transcending the different stages of the form trance and of attaining the purified stage of the Fourth jhāna, although he attained it through his unique method of organizing the form trance mentioned in the First Phase of this research (The Trance under the Rose-apple Tree, and the Fourth Trance).

This meditative uniformity found in the different categories of meditation is the fertile ground upon which meditative knowledge is found to sprout. The validity of this knowledge is claimed to be self-evident, for the proof of such an assertion cannot be demonstrated.

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X

Critical Study of Knowledge of Human Destiny

Prophecy of One's Own Destiny

We are not concerned here with the philosophical question of destiny. The destiny we are interested in is the possibility of its knowing beforehand regarding a few important events of one's own future. The future should or should not have been so fixed, as to allow a yogin to foresee some events, in a manner, at a place or time to happen as predicted. There are several instances in the text and commentary.

Generally, some renowned elders foretold their own decease with regard to its place and time, and a few personages even declared the manner of their death. It is indeed a matter of uncommon knowledge. Probably the foreteller of such events sees some sign indicative of them, or he sees it vividly enough in the mental field; but the elders must have seen the events to know these so definitely.

The Master knew it at least three months before, but he did not declare the place of his passing away. His disciple, Sāriputta, knew it before a week and also the place of occurrence. Mahāmoggallāna had declared long before the manner of his decease. The means of knowing such events appears to be that of meditation alone.

If one is able to see such an event, one should have been

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able to see other events about oneself as well. There are several instances of elders knowing some future events relating to the order of monks even after the Passing-away of the Master. We might easily ascribe them to some purposiveness edifying the monastic order ; but the talk about these events shows that the means of knowing them was not doubted even then.

If events could be foretold many years before, they would be presenting a problem before us. Are we to think that the future will have fixed them so rigidly that they will happen naturally ? Or, will they come off exactly so, because of the powerful prophecy of yogins ? Or, will the future events naturally find their reflexion in the mind of appropriate yogins ? Or, are these chance occurrences ?

No such questions ever bother the mind of a yogin. He organizes a trance, wills to know something about this or that future, sees or understands it, and gets satisfied with it. He may or may not have spoken it, but it is his fore-knowledge or prophecy nonetheless. This sort of silent prophecy is possible even now.

The Master happened to see many such things ; some of them were verified by the visiting spirits or heavenly beings; these were, if profitable to the clergy or the laity, told them; many more might have been left off untold. Most suttas of the Sagāthaka (with verse) Vagga of the *Samyutta Nikāya* mention such visiting beings.

The remembrance of the past and the foreseeing of the future are of course not necessary for the penetration of the knowledge of Liberation. But these two important facets of Buddhistic knowledge are worth acquiring or at least understanding. These might broaden our mind to some desirable extent unseen before, even if we happen to hold views none other than we find at present.

If the commonsense of the people be in any sense a guiding principle of the silent nature, the destiny of individuals, peoples, and even of the world appear to be as natural as the laws of nature. We may deny everything relative to element of human life, but can scarcely refuse to believe in its outcome when it appears in our own actual experience, no matter what and how we are disposed to call and explain it.

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Buddhism and especially the Master's system have not included the topic of human destiny in it without due consideration of this question. This has been definitely accepted in most Oriental philosophies and religions on logical grounds as well. The destiny is gradually and steadily formed by our own fruit-bearing kamma, it is held so in them. The denial of this process would entail, according to them, the illogical position of 'the gaining of what was never done and the destruction of what was done.' This is as much as to say that something is produced without doing anything for it.

The law of kamma or karma determines its fruit; the accumulation of these fruits is collectively spoken of as 'destiny' but it is indeterminate as regards its fruition in time or occasion; it is never active and cannot bear another fruit out of itself; this is, generally speaking, the position of the Oriental philosophical doctrine including even that of Buddhism concerning human destiny.

The ultimate destiny of the human body is obviously death and disintegration, so is that of the earth we are living on. But it is not all; there is said to be something more than this physical destruction. Human beings go on being born or having rebirths in regions higher or lower according to their deserts, from eternity to eternity or excepting those who cease to do so.

Destiny is not, however, the same thing as 'fatality'. The totally deterministic idea of fatality has been expressly negated by the Master in several suttas, one of these is the 'Sīvaka-sutta' (*Samyutta* IV. 36. 21). Herein the wanderer ascetic, Moliya-sivaka by name, asks the Master in Rājagaha as follows;

> There are, Bho Gotama! some Samaṇas and Brāhmaṇas who hold such views and such theories as— 'Whatever this individual person feels and experiences pleasant, unpleasant, is all due to the Kamma done before (pubbe-kata-hetu).' Herein what do you Gotama say?

The Master explains his position to the questioner as under:

> Here, Sīvaka! some afflictions arise due to bile; one

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should know it even by himself, Sivaka! that some afflictions arise due to bile ; the people also hold it, Sivaka ! as true that some afflictions arise due to bile. Therein, Sivaka ! those Samaṇas and Brāhmaṇas who hold such views ... transgress what is known even by themselves, and also transgress what is held by the people as (obviously) true. Hence it is false (views) of those Samaṇas and Brāhmaṇas, I say."

In the same manner the Master goes on to state that "there are some afflictions arising due to phlegm .. due to wind... due to their joint complication ... due to the affects [sic] of weather ... due to adversity ... due to sudden attack ..." And lastly, the Master states that there are "some afflictions arising due to the Kamma-vipāka ..."

Similar views are met with those of the Niganṭha Nāṭaputta as reported by his disciples to the Master, while the Master was staying in the neighbcurhood of the town of Devadaha in the Sakka-country of the Shākyas. The Master refuted the improper and incorrect way of removing these afflictions as taught and practised by those Niganṭhas (*Majjhima* III. 1. Devadaha-sutta). These views were, as reported in the sutta, as follows :

"Whatever this individual person (purisa-puggala) feels and experinces pleasant, umpleasant (sukha, dukkha), or neither pleasant nor unpleasant is all due to the Kamma done before (Pubba-kata-hetu). Hence when the past kammas are annihilated through (the conducting of) penance, and when the new kammas are not done, there will be no 'Avassava' (effect of action) in future, the kammas are ended. When there is an end of kammas, the suffering is ended. When the feeling (vedanā) is ended all the suffering will be destroyed.

The commentary understands the phrase 'pubbe-kata-kamma-hetu' as 'due to the cause of former action' and comments :

"By this (dogmatism), the feeling of kamma and the feelling of kiriya are discarded, and only the feeling of Vipāka alone

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is accepted." The vipāka is the manifestation of the fruit of the kamma done in some previous life ; the kamma and kiriyā on the other hand would mean here the act and activity of a person without any reference to one's former fruit-bearing action (kamma).

The sum and substance of the above two suttas is obviously the following :

> There are pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feeling, due to many causes, and not only due to one's own past kamma maturing and producing its fruit at the moment. The unpleasant or painful feeling of occurrence at present might be due to some disease arising out of the three fundamental elements of bile, wind, phlegm, and their joint combination becoming inharmoniously unbalanced. Such unfavourable feeling might also arise due to similarly unfavourable affects [sic] of water, adverse and accidental circumstances, and not only due to one's own past kamma maturing and fructifying at the moment of experiencing such feelings.

The commentry on the second sutta deals extensively with the last category of the feeling, that is the kamma-vipāka. The short summary of the commentaryis as follows :

> It is very difficult to determine whether or not the feeling experienced at the present moment has arisen due to one's past fruit-bearing action (kamma-vipāka) alone. There are several categories of this action; none of these can be changed into another category: one of the categories is the diṭṭha-dhamma vedanīya, which has been explained even particular through instances; this term means the fruit experienced in the present life—the fruit of the action done in this very life.

This category of kamma or action might be specially meritorious or notoriously evil ; there are particular instances of both in the text and commentary. So the field of destiny is narrow as well as particularized in Buddhism. It is in no sense fatalististic in the Master's system or Buddhism. At any

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rate our kamma or action would determine its fruit, but we cannot be sure of when and how the fruit will appear in its full manifestation.

Hence the foreseeing of one's own destiny would naturally be tantamount to the following of one's action done in the past or the present. The Master appears to have actually done so, as the wording of the relative branch of super-normal knowledge discloses in the Second Knowledge of the regular course of the three branches of Knowledge. This Second Knowledge of knowing others' destiny is found to be effected largely through the correct application of the divine eye (dibbacakkhu).

The First Knowledge, that is, the remembering of one's own past lives, alone is evidently not enough to foresee one's destiny in future. And it is difficult to know and understand the correct outcome of an action done in the past, even of one's own. Consequently some tentative method might be tried on this area of knowing, or rather getting a glimpse of one's own 'destiny'. This method is, of course, not arbitrary, but logically derived from some authentic suttas mentioned in the next section.

Tentative Method of Prophecy—of Others' Destiny: of One's Own Destiny: A Glimpse of the Future

The preaching of 'dhamma-ādāso', or the Mirror of the Dhamma, was done in the Giñjakā Monastery of Nātikā lying in between Koṭigāma and Vesāli (*Dīgha* II. 3, Mahā-Parinibbāna sutta) by the Master in his last year. Herein the Master says to Ānanda:

"Herein therefore, Ānanda: I am going to preach the discourse of the Mirror of the Dhamma. Endowed with this, my noble disciple (ariya-sāvaka), if so desirous, may (will be able to) prophesy about his own (destiny) by himself." The short prophecy is of wide significance. The disciple has to foresee much more before knowing that he is definitely set "to obtain the sambodhi" or enlightenment at some future time.

This precept gives us a lead in the tentative method we are proposing in this section. Before attempting to get a glimpse into the destiny of others, it would be better and more profitable to try to have a look into that of one's own. It will naturally be

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difficult to verify such a prophecy of the future event. But a yogin should never bother about the verification of what he sees as a future event. If he does anything of this sort, he will never have the confidence in his own power of prediction.

For the yogin never means to profit by the commercialization of what he knows through his yogic power; the correct prophecy depends most probably on his disinterestedness in its outcome also. Hence the tentative method may be safely conducted. Without going into details about the preliminaries of jhāna, abhibhāyatana, or kasiṇa, the following procedure of meditative concentration would give us a tentative method of getting a sort of glimpse into the future of one's own:

> Select a place of seclusion; sit down thereon alone; try to make the mind speechless by engaging the mind either in observing the respiration as in the practice of Ānāpāna, or in observing the feeling throughout the body. This will gradually lead to the preliminary state of the first Jhāna. The intention of knowing one's own future would be present in the mind, even if it be speechless.
>
> The intention of knowing the future should be gradually made active through the mental eye, and not through mental speech as in deliberation. For the mental eye is more efficient in visualizing the future event likely to happen than the mental deliberation in speech howsoever inaudible, so to say, to the inner ear. It is tantamount to the preliminary work to organize the divine eye.
>
> When the mind, in such a state of concentration, automatically tries to see in the future, the mental speech occurring off and on, may gradually cease to arise. The continuance of meditation would slowly assume the state of trance. In such a state of trance, if the mental eye be keen, it is possible that we see some visual scene. The intention present from the beginning might make this occasional scene significant. It may be indicative of some future concerning us.

On Others' Destiny: Future Events

The scene visible in meditation is not visual to the physical eye; it is not physically perceptible; it may not materially

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exist anywhere in space. Nevertheless the scene so seen by the mental eye must be at any rate the mental counterpart of the future event in the making. The scripture says that some important future events were seen by great elders, even after the Passing-away of the Master.

We may believe such future events with certain reservations, but what the elders saw at that time must have been the scene we have mentioned above. Thus the mental picture of some probable coming events appears in meditation, if the yogin is not forgetful of his relative intention while he is meditating. The verification of such pictures in actual future occurrence is quite another matter.

The Master often spoke of future events with certain conditions and reservations. Thus the future attainment of arhatship by Ānanda was declared with reservation at the last time of the Master. The prophecy of the Vajjian country lapsing at the hands of the young king of Magadha, Ajātasattu, was not textually unequivocal as reported in the Mahāparinibbāna sutta. The massacre of the Shākyas by the young king of Kosala must have been foreseen by the Master, but he never disclosed it; perhaps he thought that the worst of such an untoward calamity might pass with little damage.

Thus the prophecy about future events declared by any savant might not be taken as literally correct or precisely as predicted. There might be factors affecting them so favourably, unfavourably, or differently that these events in the making might have been constantly changing. The law of kamma as stated in the suttas such as the 'cūla and Mahā Kamma-vibhaṇga' (*Majjhima* III. 35, 36) is intricate.

The commentary on these suttas makes the kammic law still more complicated by introducing modes other than the regular laws mentioned in the above sutta (No. 36) by the Master himself. According to these laws, the kammas are divided into three categories with respect to the manifestation of the kammic fruit, that is, 'vipāka' in time.

The first is the 'diṭṭha-dhamma vedanīya', or felt or manifest in the current life. The second is the 'upapajja vedanīya', or felt or manifest in the life next to the current one. The third is

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the 'aparā-pariya vedaniya', or felt or manifest in any life other than these two. Buddhist psychology tries to explain these laws through the active will at the regular run of 'javana' in the cognitive process. The will at the first moment of javana generates the first category; the will at the last or seventh moment of javana generates the second one; the will at any one of the moments between the first and the last generates the third one.

This is why it is, explains the Master, that a person doing meritorious works at present is found enjoying heavenly pleasure after death, while another doing the same is seen in suffering and adversity in the after-life. In like manner one notoriously bad is seen enjoying pleasant life after death, while another evil person is found rightly suffering for his evil deeds in the next life. This apparent fallacy is due to the three laws mentioned above and similarly explained by the Master.

In addition to this intricacy of good and evil actions manifesting their result in an appropriate time, not when we expect, the commentary on the sutta (No. 35) mentioned above introduces four modes of action aggravating or ameliorating the vipāka (result) already come into operation. The text of the sutta, however, states only one alternative to the main result, heaven or hell, of the good or bad actions, respectively. The alternative textually given has been probably systematized in these four modes.

One of them is the 'upapiḷaka', or crushing down; another is 'upacchedaka', or cutting off; these two modes of kamma are regarded as morally evil by the commentator; for they are the after-effect of an evil kamma; only evil kammas have such double effects, one being the main result, while the other is the secondary one. The third is the 'janaka', or producing birth according to the main kamma; this may be good or bad in the moral sense, while the fourth is taken in a morally good sense only.

The commentary is clearer, fuller, and more particular than what is given in the relative portion of the division of kammas (*Visuddhi-magga*, Chapter XIX. para 16). It has, however, explained the above four modes in a general sense and applied them to both the good and bad moral kammas and their vipāka.

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The subcommentary on the *Visudhi-magga* (Paramattha-mañjūṣā also follows the main work in substance.

Instances of cases on both these interpretations stated above are found in the text and commentary. The Elder Aṅgulimāla is the famous instance of the interpretation of the evil done before but crushed down by the good kamma practised afterward. Briefly the verse (No. 173) of the Lokka-vagga in the Dhammapada states it; the Aṅgulimāla Vatthu or story of the relative commentary would present the case before us.

But many cases even of liberated elders would show that the evil cannot be crushed down even with the attainment of arhatship; the vipāka or result of an evil kamma appears unexpectedly with great adversity; even the Buddha was no exception to this untoward event. The sacred story (apadāna) entitled 'Ribba-kamma-Pilotika-Buddha—apadana' (apādāna I. 39. 10) refers to several untoward events falling up on the Buddha due to his former kammas manifesting in them.

The story is told to the assembly of monks by the Master himself; the occasion is not mentioned; the place of its preaching is rather doubtful; it is said that the place was near the like of mythical Mānasarovara (Anotattasara). The present lake of this name-sake does not correspond to the mythical description of this scriptural lake in the least. Thus this apadāna itself would appear doubtful: but the events of this story might belong to those of regular Jātaka stories, as we find the last event mentioned herein about Jotipāla.

These textual and commentatorial intricacies and complications of occurrences even due to the former kammas and their consequential result would show that these events are extremely difficult to be correctly predicted through a logical sequence. The only way to an access of this knowledge of destiny either of others or of one's own would be the tentative one described above and below in the few paragraphs of this section about visualizing the future scene in the state of meditation.

This sort of scenic view might be perceived in the mental field, while organizing the divine eye towards the future, that is destiny, of others or one's own.

The step to know the future is to start from the person as a

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whole, not the symbolic representation of the person alone, whether the person be oneself or someone else. The percept or concept of the person, when entirely felt or grasped, will seem to be the whole of it, that is, the person, not the name or any spmbol of the person concerned.

The visualization of this sort of view, if experienced, would encourage one to practise further. This process might definitely lead one to the tentative knowledge of one's or others' destiny.

The practiser should not be very keen to verify it; for the verification of yogic knowledge does not admit of material or physical examination especially of the future. The yogin should be content with the success of his mental vision, which would gradually become the representation of the future events and thereby the Destiny.

In short, the divine eye has been regarded as the means of knowing this destiny; this supernormal sight originates from and depends upon jhāna or trance with a relative will or intention. We should never forget that the potentiality of yoga is as extensive as that of the human mind. The Master's system has fully disclosed that the mental extensiveness reaches the limit of omniscience.

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Nigamana

I concluding this phase of the research on the Buddha's system of meditation, I offer my greatest gratitude to those great savants of Buddhist literature who have worked so hard as to make me wonder at its dimensions. I believe, whoever wants to write anything serious out of the original matters has to devote his time and energy to its exposition without counting and measuring them and also without any hope of reward. This is what I find in our savants, ancient as well as modern.

Hence if my experience of these six decades may seem to count anything with our later generation who might think of doing some serious work in Buddhist meditation, I have no hesitation in advising them to write what they find in the relative text after weighing its practical side well in the mind. The commentary will not let them go astray, but it will often bewilder the modern with its profusion of exposition and scholastic explanation.

Only a practical approach saves us from leaving the attempt in dismay. At any rate the commentary is not and cannot be wrong and misleading; it is not, however, critical of its source; it is not free to write whatever it may find in the original source; it has to follow the school or the tradition it belongs to. Consequently the modern writer should use the commentary properly

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and not without a critical approach. With this remark. made most reluctantly, I beg to conclude this phase of the research. May the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha enlighten u all!!!

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Bibliography

The Bibliography already tabulated in the First and subsequent Phases of this research consists of original source books in Pāli, Buddhist Sanskrit, and Sanskrit. These books have been fully utilized in this Seventh Phase also. Although the books of the *Tipiṭaka* do not carry equal authority, validity, and even rationality with one another, I have found it better to utilize them than to reject or ignore some of them, as required for the elucidation of the subject or topic or thesis under research. For the text of any category is generally found to have a commentary, which contains a sort of additional, informatory, or elucidatory enlargement of the text.

The commentary cannot, however, take the place of the original text; but the additional matter in the commentary, if any, makes the text interesting and its study critical. This approach has probably made the research pleasant to read also. The text of the *Tipiṭaka* is certainly vast; the commentatorial literature has made it still vaster; but this research has nowhere let such additional matter obscure the original text.

Let us not, however, forget that the practical device of yoga and insight can never be difficult of comprehension, but of course it is not easy to succeed in it. All the authorities maintain that the Buddha succeeded completely in it within the period

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of his Enlightenment. There is no reason why we should not partially do so sooner or later within our own life-span. May the Buddha guide our steps to our satisfaction in his own mysterious way unknown to us!!!

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Ayodhya Prasad Pradhan (b. 1904) is a well-known Nepalese Buddhist scholar of Pali language, scripture, philosophy and literature. He has participated in several Buddhist seminars and conferences.

A practitioner of Hatha Yoga in his younger days and later of Laya Yoga, he came to discover the superiority of the Buddha's system of meditation over the other known systems and practised it.

Pradhan obtained his B.A. (Honours in Pali) from the Banaras Hindu University. He is an alumnus of the Nalanda Pali Institute and a gold-medallist M.A. (in Pali) of the Bihar University. He studied Education in America and got his Master's degree from the University of Maryland. He has visited Switzerland, France, Germany, and Australia.

After his retirement from service in His Majesty's Government of Nepal he worked as an adviser to it in the Ministry of Finance, as a specialist in the Department of Folklore in the Royal Academy of Nepal and as a specialist in compiling the *Encyclopaedia of Nepal* in the Nepalese language.

Pradhan has been conducting research on the Buddha's system of meditation at the Research Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) in the Tribhuvan University since 1974. His published works include *Nepal ko Dharmik Sahisnut* (Religious tolerance of Nepal) and many articles on religion, folklore, dialects, Yoga, and literature.

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